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THE

# LOGIC

OF

## THE CHRISTIAN FAITH:

BEING

### A DISSERTATION

ON SCEPTICISM, PANTHEISM, THE A PRIORI ARGUMENT, THE A POSTERIORI ARGUMENT,  
THE INTUITIONAL ARGUMENT, AND REVELATION.

BY

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TO  
THE HON. CHARLES SUMNER,  
SENATOR OF THE UNITED STATES.

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ESTEEMED AND DEAR SIR,

When, without my knowledge, you did me the honour to procure in the United States the republication of "The Theory of Human Progression," I was engaged, without your knowledge, in procuring the republication in this country of one of those splendid orations which, in the present day and in the English language, have no superiors, and scarcely an equal.

This circumstance alone would have induced the present dedication; but as it is known to the world that you stand in the fore-front of a most momentous struggle,—that you represent, more than any living man, the principle of free thought, free speech, and the self-government of free citizens,—that literature, philosophy, eloquence, and high position, have combined to shed lustre round the name of CHARLES SUMNER,—I beg leave to dedicate this volume to you, as a tribute of respect.

Your faithful servant and friend,

PATRICK EDWARD DOVE.



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## P R E F A C E.

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THE present Dissertation attempts to trace the progress of human thought and human reasoning from the absolute negation of belief up to the highest and most complex form of credence. It is, therefore, entitled "The Logic of the Christian Faith;"—meaning thereby, not a discussion of the doctrines of the Christian faith, but a discussion of its logical defences,—the object being to remove the difficulties that are supposed to derive their power from systems of philosophy. Without philosophy (tacit or explicit) there can be no speculative theology; and without theology there can be no theory of a christology. The Dissertation, therefore, proceeds on the principle of discussing Scepticism (or the universal negative),—Pantheism (or the universal affirmative),—and Natural Theology and Revelation (or the particular affirmative). The particular negative, being

the form of argumentation employed against superstitions and false religions, is not discussed.

In meeting the philosophic difficulties which have been supposed to lie in the way of a positive theology, the endeavour has been to encounter them fairly on their own ground,—not to understate them or avoid them, but to show, by the plainest and most evident appeal to the common reason of mankind, that those difficulties arise from fallacies, from illicit processes, or from an imperfect analysis of thought.

The argument, therefore, proceeds on the principle of showing,—

1. That a theologic argument is not, and cannot be, the demonstration of a theorem, but the solution of a problem.

2. That philosophic Scepticism is untenable, inasmuch as science does actually attain to the knowledge of causes, and uses causes in the ordinary operation of indubitable calculation.

3. That Pantheism is merely a mode of viewing the universe which might be entertained by a single individual, if existing alone, and having no intercourse with other beings or fellow-creatures.

4. That the induction from nature is altogether unsatisfactory, and cannot lead to an Infinite Person.

5. That the moral argument is absolute, and, therefore, infinite.

6. That the moral idea being projected into the region of nature, the two regions become united, and nature is seen to arise from the will of the Moral Deity.

7. That the only possible mode of arriving at objective truth is by a Revelation from an Infinite Being; which Revelation shall be subjective in its evidences and objective in the matter of its truth.

Such are the philosophic conclusions. With what validity they have been proven the reader must determine.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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ON THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF AN ARGUMENT INTENDED AS  
A PROOF OF THE DIVINE EXISTENCE.

§ 1. AN argument advanced as a satisfactory proof that there exists an immortal, all-seeing, all-wise, all-powerful, and infinitely good BEING, who is the Creator, Father, and Preserver, not only of man, but of universal nature, existing at all times and in all places—must necessarily assume one of two forms. It must be either *the demonstration of a theorem*, or *the solution of a problem*.

*First*, On the supposition that the existence of such a Being is *doubtful*, the argument assumes the form of a *theorem*, which requires to be *demonstrated*.

*Second*, On the supposition that the existence of such a Being is *absolutely certain*, the argument assumes the form of a *problem*, which requires to be *solved*.

Whether we regard the form of the argument in the one light or the other, may appear matter of indifference, seeing that the essential requisite in either

case is to start from indisputable or undisputed premises, and so to conduct the process of proof by the rules of valid logic, that the conclusion shall plainly appear to flow inevitably from the admitted premises.

It is certain, however, that consequences of the very utmost importance attach to the manner in which we view this question.

§ 2. If we suppose the fact of the Divine Existence to *depend* (for its admission by *man*) on a demonstration that can be mastered by the human reason, and reduced to written or spoken language, we must grant that if the demonstration fail in its minutest point, man has *not* evidence that God is.

And again, if we assume that a demonstration \* is necessary, before we are authorised in believing this most imminent of all truths, we have attached to the real and vital question two *postulates*; and if these postulates assume the possibility of something being done which no man has as yet shown himself capable of doing, we shipwreck our whole argument on the *postulates*, and arrive at a *false* conclusion, not because evidence is wanting, but merely because we

\* The term *demonstration* is sometimes claimed as belonging exclusively to mathematical science. This, however, is a narrow view of the logical process. The anatomist demonstrates, when he points out matters of fact cognisable by the senses; and the chemist demonstrates, when he proves to the reason that a compound is composed of certain (hitherto) simple substances. In these, and in similar cases, when a matter of *fact* is in question, the term means *satisfactory proof*. As opposed to *solution*, it means the *deductive* process of proof, the deduction of a particular case from a more general principle.



have not power to perform something above and beyond what was really requisite.

In assuming the necessity of a demonstration capable of proving the theorem, the first postulate is, *That the logical reason can reduce to form the evidence that God exists*; the second, *That human language can express that evidence in such a complete manner as to render the conclusion logically indisputable*.

If either postulate assume more than can be performed, the demonstration fails, and fails not because *the evidence is insufficient*, but because man has not the power to *represent* the evidence, either in his own formal reason in *thought*, or to his fellow-men in *language*.

Now, to show that there is a case in which we have evidence of the utmost conceivable certitude, and yet where both of these postulates are denied by perhaps the most profound school of philosophy—that of Kant—we shall point to the one fact of our *own* existence. We can conceive nothing more absolutely certain than that *we exist*. Here we have the ultimate of all possible certitude. *As fact*, it is not within the power of man to imagine any thing more indubitable than that he is, moves, and has his being. But if we postulate that we can reduce this indubitable fact to logical form, and seize it by the representative reason (as distinguished from the intuitive reason), we shall fail; and we shall fail most certainly, if we presume to construct an argument demonstrating our own existence to other men.

They may *know* that we exist, but can we construct any argument whatever that proves this by any process of reasoning? And if we *cannot*, as will be admitted by every student of modern philosophy (even by those who assume the knowledge of the *absolute*—for *man* is not the absolute), then it follows that man *may* have knowledge which he cannot represent to his formal reason, and much less reduce to language.

In applying this principle to the theological argument, it is proper to point out the fact, that the evidence *may* be good, even though either or both of the above postulates be *denied*. To every man in the world there is evidence of one fact which the formal reason cannot master, and which no language can explain—namely, the fact of his own existence. To every man in the world there *may*, therefore, be evidence of God's existence, even though there could not possibly be a demonstration of that existence. And, consequently, if the utmost effort of mankind should fail in establishing a logical proof, that failure would *not* entail the conclusion that we have no evidence for the existence of God. It would only entail the conclusion, *that we had postulated more than we, as human reasoners, were able to perform*. Man's inability to realise in formal thought or formal language the ground of his belief (except as a *faith*) is no argument *against* the belief. If it were so, we may on the *same* grounds deny our own existence, and that of all other men.

Let us then endeavour to find a reason for this

conclusion—namely, that man may (and must) have a most valid belief even where no logical reasoning is capable of expressing itself. Let us assume the existence of God, and the possibility of an individual proof in the heart of man that He *is*. Then, the proof *terminates* with man, it does not *originate* with man. Man is the recipient, not the creative agent of the proof. If God have made his own existence manifest to man, it is plainly evident that all that is requisite is, that man should *have* the proof, but not at all requisite that man should have the power of expressing that proof in language; for this is an extra addition over and above all that was requisite to constitute man's responsibility, the *publication* of the proof being essentially different from the *constitution* of the proof. If we suppose that in this, the greatest of all questions, the nearest and most direct relation is between God and man, and not between man and his fellow, we may quite well suppose that there is to every man, if he will only see the truth, the most perfect evidence of a moral law and of a moral Lawgiver, and yet that man may *not* have been endowed with the further faculty of excogitating that law and Lawgiver in his intellect, so that he can *comprehend* them and reduce them to form.

§ 3. Let us now ask in what a solution differs from a demonstration.

A solution is not to *prove* the existence of God, but it is an endeavour to trace in our own minds (and in language, if possible) all the various steps of

thought by which we are supposed to know, and actually do believe that existence.

Here we start with the two facts—first, that we exist; and, second, that God exists; and the problem or question is to unite the two propositions by a chain of *explication*,—to trace in detail every separate thought that goes to make up the sum of the belief. We are not assuming that the *conclusion* is doubtful, but that the *postulates* are doubtful; and we wish to verify by proof whether they are so or not, and, if possible, to find out the *best* form of representing to ourselves and others the complete phenomenon of our faith,—of a faith which is not to be *established* by the solution, but only elucidated to our rational satisfaction. The great advantage of this view is, that if we *fail*, the question remains exactly as it was before. We still believe that we exist, and that God exists; and the only result is, that we have failed in our psychological experiment of endeavouring to apprehend by the formal reason *every* process of the mind in its passage from the finite me (the frail, imperfect, half-knowing, fleeting, and trembling me) to the infinite, the endless, the self-existent GOD.

If, then, we insist on a demonstration, and our demonstration *fail*, we have no alternative but to say that man has no ground for his belief—in fact, that he *ought not* so to believe. But if we put the question in the form of a problem, and ask only for a solution, we say that if all mankind were to fail in finding that solution, our faith in the *fact* is not shaken a hair's-breadth. We have only proclaimed

our imbecility, our powerlessness to fathom a depth which God never intended that we should fathom; and if at the last it should even prove so, we must bow our heads in reverence, with the firm assurance that He who made mankind, bestowed all the powers that were good for man, and that He who redeemed mankind did not leave himself without a witness.

This, then, is the only form in which we are at liberty to take up the first question of *God's existence*; not as a matter doubtful in itself, but only as a matter which may, or may not, be made apparent to the logical faculty—to the formal reason of mankind. We do not endeavour to *make* the proof, but only to *trace* the proof. Failure is no defeat, and success does not make the conclusion one iota more certain than it was before.

§ 4. Considering, then, the theological question as a problem, it may assume *three* forms, and each form will furnish a separate, and in some respects different solution.

1st, The solution may be objective, empirical, and limited. This it is when it endeavours to assign the Major Cause of *Nature*. All human *experience* being concrete and finite, we cannot logically from a finite term infer an infinite term. We can infer power and constructive wisdom, but not infinity.

2nd, The solution may be intellectual, subjective, *a priori*, abstract, and *non*-limited. This it is when we examine the fundamental concepts of the intellect, and find that we can assign no limits, either to space or time, even in thought. Whatever is *necessarily*,

is also necessarily unlimited or unconditioned in thought. This solution cannot give us the *fact* of existence, and consequently it does not apprehend the main element. It gives us only the *form* of existence, and leaves us to acquire the concrete element from some other source. The first solution cannot determine the *quantity* of existence; this second solution cannot determine the *quality*.

3rd, The solution may be at one and the same time abstract and concrete, *a priori* and empirical, subjective and objective, finite and infinite. This it is when we examine the moral law within, combined with its fruits and products in the phenomenon of life. The moral law (like the law of causation) requires for its achievement two elements—one subjective and *a priori*, the other objective and empirical; and as, while yet ignorant, all men may differ as to what particular cause produces a given phenomenon, without this affecting in the least degree the general law of causation,—so may all men differ (while yet ignorant) as to *what* particular acts are approved or forbidden by the moral law, without this in the least degree affecting the general law of *duty*. Inwardly, the moral law is infinite in degree, and cannot be fully satisfied without *perfection*: outwardly, we sum up the consequences of obedience or disobedience, and in a limited and empirical manner infer the moral intentions of the Creator. Inwardly, we have to do with the “categorical imperative,” which says, “This oughtest thou to do,” and “That oughtest thou not to do:” outwardly, we have to infer

from pains and pleasures, from sickness and health, from ruin and destruction, or solid success; from the course of nature viewed no longer as exhibiting physical phenomena, but as exhibiting the consequences of acting on one set of motives rather than another.

It is plain that the first or physical solution does not contain a *moral element*; and, consequently, does not afford the slightest possibility of making known a moral Deity. The second solution does not even approach the idea of morals. It gives at the utmost the blank formula of existence and causation, and teaches us rather *how* we are to think than *what* we are to know.

These three forms, although logically separated in the intellect, are, in fact, only the separate portions of one and the same major problem. They all meet in man; and to man they are valid, not merely in their separate form, but as united into the distinct elements of a more general question that involves them all.

This major problem includes *Revelation*; and it presents itself in this form:—

*Given*, man's empirical experience of Nature;

*Given*, man's intuitive and necessary form of Thought;

*Given*, the Moral Law written on man's heart:

To find in what *manner* the character of God, as made known by direct inspiration and revelation, coincides with *all* the three elements of natural theology.

This appears to be the ultimate problem of a universal theology, that includes every separate branch of natural knowledge; and which endeavours to prove, that, so far from the knowledge of Nature, or the intuitions of the Reason, or the dictates of the Moral Consciousness, being *contrary* to Revelation, it (Revelation) is in fact the source from which we derive the solution of our *natural* difficulties; and that the character of God, as made known in Revelation, fulfils at once every condition required by a science of Nature, every condition required by the intuitions of the Reason, and every condition required by the specification of the Moral Law.

§ 5. If such be the case, we learn, in some degree, to co-ordinate the elements of our knowledge, and to see what the province of the human reason really is. We cannot for a moment imagine that we have arrived at this age of the world, and that we have yet to discover whether God does or does not exist. Such a supposition is entirely out of the question. The question is not, *whether* God exists, but *how* the Divine existence can be made apparent to the *human reason*, and how the idea of an infinitely wise and good God can be co-ordinated with that knowledge of nature and of mind which man acquires by the study of the works of God. There *are* difficulties, exactly as there are difficulties between the sum of what we learn from nature, the sum of what we learn from metaphysic, and the sum of what we learn from conscience. And these difficulties (call them antinomies, or antilogies, or con-



tradictions) are, in fact, merely the confessions of man's own ignorance, and not by any means contradictory *things*,—only contradictions of apparent thought, where man has not as yet seen through the darkness.

It may possibly be that some of these antinomies are actually insoluble,—that *no* effort of the human reason can solve them. But it is very certain that some of them *have* been solved. It was once said, that “Nature abhors a vacuum;” but it was afterwards discovered that Nature did not abhor a vacuum above a certain number of feet or inches, according to the nature of the fluid. It was said, that “A thing can only act where it is;” but it was discovered that the moon influenced the tides, the earth the moon, and the sun the earth. And, consequently, it *may* be (and it may be *proven*) that these antinomies are either erroneous deliverances of an unenlightened reason, or propositions containing ambiguous terms, where (as so often) the imperfection of language imposes on the correctness of thought.

It is no answer to these cases, to say that they were *foolish* assumptions. They were called foolish only when they were proven to be *untrue*. And it is quite possible that some of the principles now admitted in philosophy (and perhaps also in physics) may be regarded in the very same light, and that the antinomies may, after all, be only such contradictions as necessarily ensue when man presumptuously supposes that he can lay down *a priori* laws of

nature or of *thought*, and can reason from vague generalities to a certain and definite conclusion.\*

It is here necessary to make one or two observations :—

1st, The objections that have been brought forward to invalidate man's belief in God's existence are not (for the most part), in any sense whatever, specially directed against natural theology. If they are valid against God's existence, they are equally valid against the existence of material substance, against efficient cause, against mental power. They are, in fact, as utterly destructive of every other branch of knowledge as they are of theology. Let us take, for instance, the dogma so often urged against the mysteries of religion (and accepted as practically by the sceptic as the dogma, that "A thing can only act were it is," was accepted by the early cultivators of physical science)—namely, that "What I cannot *comprehend*, that I cannot *believe*." This seems at first sight specious enough, and probably there *is* a sense in which the proposition is true—otherwise it would never have been advanced so extensively. But it is in *no* sense *an objection to theology*; that is, it is a principle so vast, that it would root up all mathematical, and all physical, and all mental science, quite as much as it would root up theology. The incomprehensibles are the *absolute* and the *infinite* (to which, in a secondary sense, may be added the primary and the ultimate), but

\* Some of Kant's antinomies are *evidently* based on an ambiguity or an assumption.

these are found in the mathematical sciences, and the objections ought to be argued *there* before the region of theology is approached. The centre of a circle is a point. It is absolute. It has no length, no breadth, no thickness. Yet it has positive relations. Now, *how* that which has *no* characteristic can have *positive relations* is absolutely incomprehensible—yet geometry works with the point without difficulty. Again, Space, both in idea and, as we suppose, in actual reality, is infinite,—we can conceive no limit, and we can, just as little, conceive (construe to thought) its infinitude.

And with regard to the primary and the ultimate, which are as it were secondary incomprehensibles, *every* science, without exception, begins with primaries or with ultimates, and whatever we start with, we find that at the *opposite* end there is no possibility of a termination. Thus arithmetic begins with unity (the absolute), but *no* addition, however great, will approach us one hair's-breadth nearer to an infinite number. Infinity, *minus* any conceivable number, is still infinity. Algebra, on the contrary, begins with infinite *quantity* (not *number*—number and quantity being in the inverse ratio of each other, *e.g.*, if we divide any quantity by two, we have *halved* the quantity, but *doubled* the number of parts), and out of this infinite quantity we take parts as large or as small as we please. Algebra has no unit except infinity to start with, and, consequently, we may *divide* a quantity for ever. As in arithmetic there is no termination to addition, so with

quantity there is no termination to division,—we divide for ever, but we find no unit of quantity.\*

And so in geometry, we *begin* with the point, the line, the angle, and the figure, but the complications are utterly endless.

And in chemistry, we begin with simple substances (or *pro. tem.* simple), but the combinations are utterly endless.

And in mechanics, we begin with a few simple powers; and here also the combinations are endless.

It is an undoubted fact, that every science starts from some primary terms, and from some primary propositions which are *accepted*,—the pursuit of science being the pursuit of *relations*.

Philosophy, however, regards, or attempts to regard, these primaries in a different light. The *method* of philosophy is entirely different from the method of science. Science says nothing regarding primaries except that they *are*, and then she pursues her course of inquiry into relations. Philosophy wishes to inquire into the ground of our belief concerning these primaries, and by an illegitimate process, she occasionally startles the world with the sublime discovery, that these primaries *are not* at all. The sceptical method is no less applicable to mathema-

\* Fractions do not belong to pure arithmetic, except as *expressions*. A fraction signifies, that *when* a value is assigned to the unit of the calculation, it is to be divided into so many parts. In pure arithmetic unity is *indivisible*; a *quantity* (which is *continuous*, in opposition to a *number*, which is *discrete*) is divisible *ad infinitum*.

tical and physical science, than to theological science; and the sceptical method sometimes produces results in the region of theology, which would be utterly ridiculed if alleged as objections to dynamics or chemistry, because the very same method, if applied to them, would obliterate them from the tabature of human knowledge. It is plain that an argument which would obliterate *force*, the *cause of motion*, can in no respect be considered as an objection to a First Cause, unless we can obliterate force from the science of dynamics. And it is plain that an argument which would obliterate substance from the sciences of mechanics and chemistry, cannot be considered as valid against theology, until we have actually abolished substances from the physical sciences. Nor can it be replied that this depends on an ambiguity of the word *substance*, and that in the one case it is used for a *noumenal reality*, in the other, for a phenomenal *appearance*. Such is *not* the case. For let us take, for instance, what we term a drop of water. This familiar substance may *manifest* itself as a drop of liquid, as a flake of snow, as a pellicle of ice, as a hailstone, or as a little cloud of vapour. Here the manifestations or phenomenal appearances are entirely different, yet we are absolutely constrained to believe that *the very same identical substance, the very same identical particles of matter*, constitute at one time the water, at another time the snow, at another time the ice, at another time the hail, and at another time the steam—visible or even *invisible*. And if we had not the idea of *sub-*

*stance* as distinguished from *phenomenon*, we could never by any possibility conceive the *identity* of the *noumenon* that underlies the outward and appreciable characteristic. We say nothing of the decomposition of the water into its elements, and the combination of those elements with other substances (where the senses afford us no information of what has become of the little drop of liquid, but where we must trust entirely to the *reason*—we say nothing of this), but we may confidently say, that the philosopher who should tell us that the water, the hail, the snow, and the vapour, were not the same identical *substance*, would be utterly scoffed at and ridiculed by every body of scientific men in Europe. Objections that would be scorned, if advanced against the common truths of science, are supposed to acquire some mysterious importance when advanced against the truths of theology.

Whenever, therefore, an argument is advanced for the purpose of impugning the Divine existence, the Divine personality, or the moral sovereignty of God, it is of the utmost importance to seize that argument,—not in its special application, but in its general method,—to apply it to other matters of an entirely different character, and to prove, if possible, that in these other matters it is utterly vain and futile. A method proven to be futile in the ordinary matters of belief, may be safely rejected when carried into the higher regions of infinitude.

This brings us to the second consideration.

2nd, Let us suppose that the existence of God

was *not* capable of logical proof, but that man was compelled to receive and acknowledge this truth as an ultimate or primary *fact*, as we receive and acknowledge our own existence, and that of the external world. In this case, the theological proposition would be incapable of *statement*,—it would be above and beyond the reach of the formal reason. God would be a primary of intuition, the author of the moral law within, and the *object* of man's universal feeling of responsibility. In this case, the reason would be incapable of proving the Divine existence, and also incapable of impugning it. The truth would be completely beyond the sphere of representative knowledge; and no argument of the reason, either on the one side or the other, could reach so high as the question. But even here the reason would have a wide field of exercise. In the first place, every objection made by the sceptic would be addressed to the reason, and if the reason could originate the objection, the reason could answer the objection. Thus the course of the argument (in the lapse of ages) would be this: Every possible objection would appear in its turn, and be answered in its turn. Scepticism would appear under every imaginable form, and the reason would be taxed (not to prove that God exists, but) to prove that the objection is in reality no objection. Scepticism would assume the most opposite and inconsistent attitudes,—at one time appearing as Materialism, at another as Idealism; at one time demolishing philosophy by means of positive science, at another

demolishing the possibility of knowledge by means of philosophy. Reason would have to encounter every separate form in detail, and to show the futility of every separate method, acting thus for the defence of the faith, and offensively on every new aspect of scepticism. And, in the second place, (supposing that the Divine existence could not be absolutely proven, which is our present supposition,) the reason of mankind would (with the progress of knowledge, the advancement of science, and the increase of intellectual experience derived from the critical history of exploded systems) continually approach nearer and nearer, yet never actually reach the final fact. Let us explain this position.

Assumed, we have the intuition of a MORAL INFINITE,—an infinitely wise, and infinitely good God. We grant that we cannot *prove* this existence. We grant this (provisionally), but we can prove from the equation of two terms, that the intuition is *probably true*, and every day becoming more and more so. For, in the first place, we may look back on the objections that *have* been made, and we find the great majority of them fairly met and fairly answered by an honest exercise of the reason. And, in the second place, we observe that the more man extends his knowledge, the more does the element furnished by intuition appear to be the necessary correlative of all the new truths discovered in physical or psychological science. Thus, if we confine ourselves to external nature, the probability of a wise Architect is incomparably greater in the present day, when the nice



adjustments of the various parts of the physical world have been detected by the reason, than it was when man saw only a confused mass of isolated facts, and had not, as yet, rationally apprehended the adaptation of means to an end, or laid bare those general laws which prove indubitably a unity and harmony of design. The more human knowledge progresses, the more does man depart from the narrow limits that once confined him,—the more does he verge towards the infinite; and though that infinite he cannot reach, yet there is a constantly increasing probability, that the infinite intuition of the human mind is the correlative of what human knowledge *would* be if it could be perfect and complete.

Now, although it is absolutely certain that God has *not* left man to such a meagre faith as would be afforded by a mere intuition of the “Unknown God” (for that indeed would have rendered a positive religion impossible, and most probably would end either in Pantheism or in some system akin to Pantheism), yet this view is not without its advantages. To make it the *exclusive* foundation of a faith would be destructive; but if we consider what is termed the intuition as only the abstract psychological preparation of the human mind for the knowledge of the true God, we then say that the subjective preparation or capacity must find an *objective correlative*, and that man, *with* his intuition, has still to discover *who* is God.

And also, this view (utterly imperfect as it is for the practice of life, for the explication of man’s moral

depravity, and, above all, for man's moral restoration) does yet enable us to answer some of the many forms of scepticism, and to show that even if we grant the objections, those objections are futile against the main fact of theology. It does not prove so much as is required; but it proves that scepticism is unable to attack the faith in one particular direction. It routs scepticism, but does not establish theology.

§ 6. Let us now suppose that the belief in the Divine existence is dependent on argumentation. In this case we should have to do with philosophy and logic,—philosophy determining the principles from which we were to start, and logic determining the rules by which we were to conduct the argumentation.

It is, then, plainly evident, that those who could not understand either the fundamental, and, in all probability, extremely abstract, propositions, or the *process* of the argumentation, would be utterly incapable of arriving at a personal knowledge of the most imminent truth in which they were involved. They would be obliged to take the fact on the authority of other men, and to receive a second-hand religious faith, which for them would be a practical superstition. But we know that the great majority of men, so far from being able to apprehend a very abstract scheme of argumentation, involving the highest and most ultimate terms of thought and language, are not even capable of duly appreciating an argument that establishes a great *physical* truth. Let it be, for instance, the moon's motion round the

earth, in a very singularly shaped orbit, seeing that the earth also is in continual motion: how many men, do we suppose, in Britain, have ever satisfied themselves as to the form of the moon's motion, *or are capable of beginning at the first elements of observation, and pursuing the process of calculation (reasoning), until they have consciously satisfied their intellect that the moon's orbit is what the astronomer affirms it to be?* Yet, if they *cannot* (and certainly not one man in a hundred, or even in a thousand, *can*), then their knowledge of the fact is not knowledge at all,—it is mere belief in authority, which authority might (as in the greater portion of the earth) teach them *error* instead of *truth*.

Consequently, we must say, that, if the belief in the Divine existence were *dependent* on argumentation, it would be a valid belief for only a very small portion of mankind; for, in the present circumstances of the world, where the necessity of daily toil forbids the cultivation of the intellect up to a point that would render a philosophical argumentation intelligible, it is quite impossible that the great masses should ever be able to master an argument which avowedly taxes the most subtle and most highly accomplished minds. There are few psychological truths more certain than this, that if philosophy were as complete and as well established as its most ardent admirers could wish, it would only be intelligible to a very few men of great natural genius, or to some laborious students who spent their lives in its study. Philosophy (*understood*)

can no more be *popular* than the higher mathematics. Both may furnish *results* that can be popularised; but the higher methods of logic are no more capable of being understood by the generality of men (even *educated* men, as that term is commonly received), than the higher methods of algebra, which are utterly unknown and unintelligible except to a few thousands who have paid special attention to that department. We must not conclude, however, that because a proof by argumentation would not be intelligible to the great masses of mankind, that therefore such a proof cannot be elaborated. This conclusion would be as illogical as to affirm that no man could originate the differential calculus, because out of all the men in the world only one or two could originate that method. It is quite possible, that the very highest effort of the logical reason would land as infallibly at God as the brightest illumination of the moral consciousness. Aristotle, no less than Socrates, may be a believer,—the latter through the intuition of a moral nature, the former through the logical process of the intellect. The one would say, “God is, and I cannot believe that it is *not* so;” the other would say, “God is, and I must believe that it *is* so.” The one says, “If I perceive any thing whatever with certainty, it is that I am involved in a moral law, which has necessarily an Author;” the other says, “If I know any thing with certainty, it is that there is a Cause of causes, who is the Fountain of all being.” The one says, “My thoughts all *originate* in God;” the

other, "My thoughts all *terminate* in God." The one says, "To me, God is the First;" the other, "To me, God is the Last."

"I am the First *and* the Last," says the Christian Revelation.

But, again, if we consider that human knowledge must necessarily be divided into departments or branches, we may affirm that *every* branch brings its contribution to natural theology; but then, no branch can elaborate the theological idea farther than a certain given point. The branch that treats of quantity, will say nothing of quality; another that treats of quality, will say nothing of quantity. Another that treats of *moral* obligation, may fail in establishing an objective rule of certitude; and another that pursues the objective phenomenon, will fail in detecting a moral element. This, indeed, is natural, and may be observed in regions of knowledge that have nothing to do with theology.

Hence we find that Scepticism dextrously fights one department against the other, and cunningly makes the conclusions of the one argument do battle against the conclusions of the other. Forgetting the fact, that although the branches of knowledge are *distinct* (in logical apprehension), yet they all meet in *man*, and form the sum of his knowledge, from which he has to deduce or infer his final result, Scepticism says, "If, from a finite Nature, you cannot infer an infinite Creator, you cannot from *Nature* infer God." And, "If, from a universal principle of causation, you cannot deduce the nature or character

of the cause, you cannot deduce the personality of God from the *intuitions of the reason*." And, "If, from the moral consciousness, you cannot infer the particular duties incumbent on man, you cannot infer the character of the Lawgiver." And, "If experience cannot furnish you with the knowledge of a noumenal substance, or noumenal cause, but only with an empirical fact, you cannot from this infer a *moral Governor*." Now, all this may be *true*, and yet it may be perfectly *inapplicable*. For it is quite possible that the theological argument does not depend on any *one* region, but on *all*, combined together, as they are in the whole consciousness of man, although *logically* separated for the convenience of separate investigation. And to show that this view is not to be neglected, let us take a very common instance,—a bill or note representing the value of a thousand pounds. The bill is composed of the paper, the stamp, the writing, and the signature. Its value is £1000, and *this* fact is undisputed. Let us then ask *where* the value resides. First, is it in the *paper*? Certainly not. The paper without writing is worth only a farthing. Second, is it in the *stamp*? Certainly not. The stamp is only the *possibility* of a certain value. Third, is it in the black marks, "I promise to pay," &c.? Certainly not. These are only valid in law *with* a stamp and with a signature. Fourth, is it in the signature? Certainly not. The signature is vague without an antecedent specifying what the signature is affixed for. Take this bill to pieces in the same manner

that the theological argument has been taken to pieces, and you never, by any possibility, can discover where its value resides. Yet it *has* a value, and the merchant is ready to negotiate it. The sceptic may fight the writing against the paper, the signature against the contents of the bill, the stamp against all, and, finally, he may affirm, that without paper (or its equivalent) there could not be a bill at all. Now, to show that this system of reasoning has been considered *unanswerable*, we have only to point to the pretended demonstration *that motion is impossible* (a logical *puzzle*,—an ingenious one, it is true, but yet only a puzzle), propounded by Zeno, and regarded as insoluble by the greatest of modern logicians. The argument is very similar to that employed by the sceptics. It is this,—

A body cannot move in the space which it *does* occupy; and

A body cannot move in the space which it does *not* occupy :

But the space occupied by the body and the space *not* occupied by the body constitute all space ; and

Motion must be *in* space :

Consequently, a body cannot move at all.

Now, we know most indubitably that there *is* motion, and yet we find men, of consummate ability, admitting that there can be a logical demonstration that motion is *impossible*. If such be the case, are we to be startled from our belief in the Creator, even if a pretended demonstration should land us in

a similar predicament. We do not grant that the above puzzle is *insoluble* (very far from it—for if it *were* so, it would destroy all confidence in demonstration, and all reliance on the veracity of the reasoning powers), but we point out the notable fact that it has been *considered* insoluble, and this by some of the very highest authorities.

Let us examine it, however, and test it, for it is *the* argument of a most extensive scepticism.

It proceeds on the assumption, *that what cannot be in the separate parts of a whole, cannot be at all*. Evidently an erroneous assumption. For what is the definition of *motion*? Change *from* one place to another. Therefore, it is not necessary, for motion to be *in* space, that it should be *in* this portion or *in* that portion, but only *from* one portion to another. The whole puzzle depends on the assumption, that what is not *in* each part cannot be *in* the whole.

Let us apply this to another case, as it is the most general argument of a sceptical method. Let us suppose a man leaning out of the window of a house. He is half out and half in. Now, the man is not *in* the house, nor *out* of the house; but *in* and *out* constitute all space, consequently the man is *nowhere*. Again, a line has no breadth. A given point is not *above* the line, nor *below* the line; but above and below constitute *all* space, consequently the point is not at all. Yes, *on* the line.

The argument, in its most general expression, amounts to this, "A whole is *not* the sum of all its parts." For let us take the number seven. Seven



is composed of four and three ; but the seven is not *in* the four and, it is not *in* the three: consequently, it is not *in* the four *and* the three. Motion that cannot be *in* the space occupied, nor *in* the space not occupied, cannot be *in* all space. How such verbal playthings can seriously be called *insoluble*, passes our comprehension.

It is important, however, to observe, that those who admit the demonstration to be complete, *do* admit the actuality of the *motion*.

Now, let us consider how a similar method may be casuistically brought to bear against theology.

1st. The Scriptures do not prove their own divinity—(granted for a moment for the sake of argument);

2nd. The inference from Nature is not able to reach infinity ;

3rd. The *a priori* or metaphysical reason is merely abstract, and cannot prove a *fact* ;

4th. The moral consciousness (taking man all over the world) is indefinite :

Consequently, what is not *in* each part separately, cannot be *in the whole* of the parts combined. Exactly, as if we were to say—

Water cannot support animal life ;

Air cannot support animal life ;

Solid food cannot support animal life :

Consequently, water, air, and solid food cannot support animal life.

Such are the *arguments* that would rob man of his hope of immortality.

§ 7. Before concluding these observations on the scope of a theological argument, attention must be called to the fact that the Church has too often allowed herself to appear as acting only on the defensive. She has allowed Scepticism to take the *initiative*. She has been contented with repelling the invasion, and then she has retreated within her breastworks. But might not the Church (using the word, of course, in its universal sense)—might not the Church do somewhat more than this? Might she not, instead of repelling Scepticism, rather assume the initiative, and attack the *methods* of Scepticism? Calmly, honestly, and freely, might she not carry the war into the enemy's camp, and endeavour, not merely to defend herself, but to throw light upon the very principles of argumentation, by taking up the forms of Scepticism, and proving that they were wrong, not merely in their *application*, but in the very essence of their *method*? It is not *controversy* that is required, but *investigation*. Let the forms of Scepticism be looked fairly in the face—let them be measured in their full capacity, let them be *mastered*. The Church can have nothing to fear from Germany, France, America, or even Britain, if she will bend her strength to the contest. Let her grasp Scepticism in its most powerful form of philosophic subtlety, or in its wildest aspect of learned aberration. Let her not flinch nor retreat, but meeting subtlety with subtlety more profound, and learning with equal erudition, let her proclaim to the assembled world that she knows herself to be *right*

and the world to be *wrong* ; and that, surely convinced of this truth, she will admit all that philosophy can show to be true, and all that learned research can show to be true, and *yet*, that she can maintain her ground, and point out to the world the more excellent way.

To others we leave the task of erudition, but we shall endeavour to assail two of the most subtle forms of philosophic scepticism : First, That which endeavours to establish that all our knowledge is *subjective* ; and, Second, Pantheism,—the two forms which would obliterate the possibility of a faith. Yet without faith, knowledge is a chaos, and life a weary passion.

—and the public health. The American Medical Association is the only organization in the United States which is composed of physicians and surgeons. It is the only organization which is recognized by the Federal Government as the representative body of the medical profession. It is the only organization which is recognized by the State Governments as the representative body of the medical profession. It is the only organization which is recognized by the National Government as the representative body of the medical profession.

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BOOK I.



SCEPTICISM.



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## SCEPTICISM.

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### CHAPTER I.

[The peculiar form of Scepticism here investigated is that which affirms "a knowledge of God to be impossible, *because* all human knowledge is *subjective*."]

§ 1. THE present question is entirely *preliminary* to the question of Religion. It is philosophical, not theological. The argument is a mere criticism of the mental process,—an endeavour to prove that the modern system of Scepticism, which affirms all our knowledge to be subjective, is fallacious. Those who have confined their reading to books of piety, will probably consider it either as unintelligible or as verbal trifling. To the careful student of philosophy, I have no fear that it will be unintelligible; the other objection I answer by an illustration:—

Let us suppose a pious countryman, who had been in the habit of reading his Bible for devotional purposes alone, walking into a class-room, where he had heard that a professor was expounding the principles of translation and interpretation. He thinks, of course, that he will learn something; but how

utter will be his disappointment, nay, perhaps, even his indignation! The professor is engaged in a grammatical criticism of some passage, which the simple countryman had ever regarded with awe, mingled with grateful delight. The pious man is shocked,—first with the manner of the discourse, and then with its matter. The professor is dispassionate, and this his auditor attributes to callous indifference; and instead of hearing what he would call the careful dividing of the word, he hears a dark and meaningless discourse on articles, particles, pronouns, cases, tenses, and moods,—subjects, objects, predicates, correlatives, and the other tools of the grammarian and logician. The countryman departs, horrified that the education of Christian men, and, above all, of Christian ministers, should be conducted on a system tending so little to their spiritual improvement. He goes home, reads the same passage with his accustomed fervour, and thinks that he discovers in it a worth and meaning incomparably better than all human learning. He returns no more to a college class-room.

One little circumstance, however, this honest countryman has forgotten. Had it not been for the careful study of these articles, particles, moods, and tenses, he never would have possessed the Scriptures in his native tongue. On this he had not reflected.

The same is true of philosophy, though not to the same extent. Philosophy is not so immediately related to revelation as is philology, yet philosophy has her uses and her duties in the world. Christianity, as a system, has her battles to fight, not only with



the hearts of men, but with the systems of belief that prevail throughout the globe. She has to vanquish idolatry in its lowest form of degraded ignorance, but she has no less to vanquish erroneous philosophy in its pride of intellectual superiority. If Scepticism lay hold of *science* (as it has so often done,—in fact, *always* at the beginning of a new science), then must the Christian *master* science to see the full import of the objection, with the fullest assurance that *no* natural truth really can be contradictory to the Word of God. And if Scepticism lay hold of psychology, and advance some crude presumptions relative to mind, as contradictory to the faith, then the Christian must endeavour to go at least as far as the sceptic in the study of mind, and to meet him with equal weapons on his own ground.\* And with philosophy, if the sceptic pretend to have reached a depth which the Christian has not reached, we must still follow him so far as he is intelligible, endeavour to find out his fallacy, and to lay bare the error of his method, or the non-consequence of his conclusion. It is by this process of constant effort and struggle, that a more general enlightenment has begun to spread over the civilised world; in fact, the world owes some—much—of its very best literature to the direct efforts of Christian men, who had been driven to re-investigate some special department of knowledge for the sole purpose of removing the doubts and difficulties of their Christian brethren. And as peace is impossible

\* “When the adversary fears not to employ all weapons, without distinction, we also must use all weapons for our defence.”—ARISTOTLE, *Top.* Book v. chap. 4.

till every cause of war has been removed, so can this warfare of conflicting credence never cease till the mind of the world has been illuminated by true knowledge, and until the Word of God has been enthroned as the living light that throws the rays of truth over man's nature, his history, and his destiny. The more often and the more vigorously the battle is fought, the greater is the progress of the world. Every great controversy has given the world an advance in the right direction,—has produced its fruit either of direct result or of accumulated experience. Strife of this kind is the soul of the world's progress; and as every natural phenomenon appears to be developed under the influence of opposite and contending forces, so does the development of human knowledge appear to depend on the strife and conflict of opposite credences, one of which is destined to be overthrown, and to disappear from the ordinary mind of the world.

### § 2. *The Argument.*

The following argument turns on the meaning and use of the terms,—

*Subjective*      and *Objective.*

*Idea*              and *Reality.*

*Phenomenon* and *Noumenon.*

These are the correlatives of each other. The term *subjective* is employed to designate that which *operates*, the term *objective* to designate that which is *operated upon*. The term *idea* is employed to designate the *mental* substantive or mental proposition; the term *reality* is employed to represent that which actually exists. The term *phenomenon* is employed

to designate that which *appears*; the term *noumenon* to designate, first, a *substance*, where we perceive a *quality*—or, second, a *cause*, where we perceive a *change*. The *quality* is phenomenal, and so is the *change*. *Substance* and *cause* are noumenal.

I shall endeavour to show that the above terms are *relative*, and that the subjective philosophy originates in the illicit process of confounding together two operations of the mind—namely, the direct or spontaneous, and the indirect or reflective.

The key to the mystery is this: Man, contemplating the universe for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, calls himself the subject, and the universe the object; and this is correct, so long as the mind acts directly and spontaneously. The intellect *operating* is always subjective. He now reflects upon his knowledge, and forgetting that the terms subjective and objective are *relative*, he still continues to call his knowledge subjective. On the contrary, the moment *thought*, or knowledge, becomes the object of contemplation, *this thought becomes objective*, and the contemplating intellect is the *subject*. *Subjective* thought can never be made the object of contemplation; for the moment it is thus viewed, it ceases to be subjective *to us*, although it may still continue to be subjective to *its* object.

Thus, the axiom in geometry is *subjective* when spontaneously used to determine the equalities of lines or figures, but when we *reflect* on the axiom itself, and no longer on the lines or figures, the *axiom* becomes *objective*. In the former case we experience its *truth*; in the latter case we examine its *form and contents*.

To illustrate this by a physical example: a quill used as a pen is subjective, but the same quill studied in its form and structure becomes at once objective. What is thus true of the quill is true of *thought*, and the subjective philosophy hinges entirely on an oversight of this principle.

*Science* is the doctrine of direct and spontaneous knowledge,—it teaches us what is *true*.

*Philosophy* is the doctrine of indirect and reflective knowledge, and it teaches us what *form* knowledge assumes and what it *contains*.

The object of science is *nature*, physical and mental; the object of philosophy is *thought*; consequently, if philosophy attempt to tell us what is true in *nature*, it can no more succeed than the grammatical investigation of a sentence can tell us whether the proposition of the sentence be *true*.

The problem of science is this: *To human sense and human reason let there be given the universe as it appears, to find what is in that universe, with the conditions, relations, actions, and reactions of the various parts.*

The problem of philosophy is: *To human reason let there be given the whole scheme of science, to find what thoughts man has employed, what methods he has pursued, and what is the final summation of man's possible knowledge on earth.* In this sense, and in this sense only, is philosophy the true and genuine *scientia scientiarum*.

Viewed in this light, philosophy is the ultimate generalization of science,—the subjection of know-

ledge to laws, as science is the subjection of the phenomena of nature to laws.

Philosophy thus throws the materials of science into their most abstract forms, and discourses of those abstract forms; Science *uses* its method, but, strictly speaking, never discourses on its method. Thus the mathematical sciences *use* the distinction of subject and predicate, analysis and synthesis, individual, species, genus, and class; and they *use*, subjectively and elliptically, the *syllogism*; but they do not *discourse* on these. The physical sciences *use* cause and effect, substance and quality, noumenon and phenomenon, but they do not discourse on these. These, in science, are concretely *realised*,—that is, there is matter as well as form; but philosophy drops out the matter, and discourses on the form. Hence, in dynamics and physical astronomy, we have the verbal definition, “The cause of motion is called force;” but we have no dissertation on the law of *cause and effect*, and no reason alleged why man infers a cause when he observes a change. Philosophy, on the contrary, drops out the *force* and the *motion*, and discourses on *cause and effect*. “The pursuit of causes is philosophy.”

The question, then, is, “*How* does the human mind view the phenomenal universe?”

It is a universal fact, that the human mind views objects under three different aspects or phases. These aspects we find repeated wherever there is human language; and their possibility is, at all events, taken for granted. These *forms* are borne

out by the abstract forms of language in its parts of speech.

*First.* We may view an object as existing. (Expressed by the substantive verb *to be*).

*Second.* We may view an object in the form, mode, or condition of its existence. (Expressed by the possessive verb *to have*. What qualities *has* the object?)

*Third.* We may view an object in its *function*, including action and reaction. (Expressed by the active verb. Passive sufferance is included under *condition*.)

(To these *natural* forms must, when we contemplate moral beings, be added the moral *ought*, the significate of *duty*, obligation, responsibility. At present I omit all consideration of the *ought*.)

To illustrate this division, let us suppose the universe in which we live to be suddenly acted on by some mighty spell, which should, for a time, arrest every motion, change, or action, of every kind or character, and should fix in their present position or attitude, every object, animate and inanimate, and should fix thought to unchanging contemplation. In such a case the aspects would be reduced to *two*. There would be no functions (except such as are metaphorically so), and our only inquiries could be: "What things *are* there?" and, "In what conditions are they?"—that is, What qualities do they possess? and, What quiescent relations do they bear towards each other?

Let us now suppose, that instead of an indefinite

multitude of diverse objects, there was but *one* (say *space*, and that man was disembodied, yet possessed of intellect), universal and homogeneous, having no diversity in its various parts, but everywhere absolutely similar.

The inquiry would now be, not concerning conditions and relations, but into existence alone,—What *is* this object?

The triplicity of aspect of which we have spoken, is found everywhere ; it is common to all knowledge and all nature, to every thing we think of the world without us, and to every thing we know of the world within us. The aspects are *relative*, and are, in fact, universal, and apparently necessary forms of thought.

External to ourselves we conceive,—

1st. Matter (the object viewed as existing).

2nd. The conditions of matter in a state of rest (the object viewed in its properties and quiescent relations).

3rd. The motions, actions, and reactions of matter (the object viewed in its function).

Within us we conceive *mind*,—the faculties of mind,—the functions of mind.

Again, we have the organ, its anatomy, its physiology—the tree, its structure, its mode of life.

The general form, then, of expressing this triplicity of aspect we shall suppose to be :

Every substantive element of thought is presented to the mind under these aspects, or under the possibility of being received under one or other of these aspects :

This triplicity of the supposed object is correlative with the mental operations, which are also three :—

The Existence.

Nomenclature.

The Condition.

Classification.

The Function.

Reasoning.

In a function, again, we find this triplicity repeated: the agent, the object, the product,—relative terms or aspects under which the mind views phenomena.

The whole realm of thought is pervaded by this principle of triplicity; and all knowledge ranges itself into this triple form, apparently by a law of man's constitution.

We do not at present inquire whether there is, or is not, any *reality* in substance, condition, function, but only whether the mind conceives of these; and we believe that all language is constructed, and always has been constructed, to express this triple form of thought. Were we to attempt to communicate with our fellow-men without assuming or expressing this threefold relation, we should at once render ourselves unintelligible.

This triple division will enable us to understand the position of the sceptical philosophy.

Man necessarily divides an object into *substance* and *attribute*; and man necessarily divides a dynamic function into *cause*, *condition* of the object, and *effect*.

Scepticism affirms that we can know the phenomenal quality, but not the substance,—the condition and effect, but not the cause. Philosophic scepti-



cism admits the reality of phenomena, in as far as these are phenomena *experienced by us*, but denies that we have any criterion for determining whether there be or be not any thing external to our own impressions. It is true that we have impressions, but what causes those impressions it is needless to inquire, as we have no criterion of truth. Such in the general is the doctrine of philosophic scepticism.

Now, let essences, substances, substrata (or whatever name may be applied to the substantive existences which the mind conceives *to have* qualities and relations) be called *noumena* :

And let apparent qualities, conditions, and relations be called *phenomena* ;

And let *causes* (which we suppose to produce the change) be called *noumena* ;

And let the phenomenal changes be called *phenomena* ;

Let the knowledge of noumena (real or supposed) be called *objective knowledge*, and the knowledge of phenomena be called *subjective knowledge* :

Objective knowledge will then be the knowledge of things external to our impressions, to our senses, and to all our direct appreciation ; and subjective knowledge will be the knowledge of such appearances and impressions as are supplied to our consciousness by the senses and by psychological observation.

*Thought* is as much a *phenomenon* as is *motion*. If we view either alone, it is a phenomenon ; and if we view either in its relations, it is a *product*,—that

is, it belongs to the third category of the triple relations. Thus:—

Force, Mind,	Agent.
Matter, Object, Noumenon or Phenomenon,	Object.
Motion, Thought,	Product.

The term *absolute knowledge*, or knowledge of *the absolute*, is sometimes employed to signify objective truth, or objective reality, or rather our knowledge of objective reality. In this sense it is opposed to *relative*; but a moment's reflection will enable us to see that the pursuit of absolute truth (in *this* sense), and truth which is not *relative to us*, is, in fact, chimerical,—that is, something which *it is not possible for us to conceive*. We may conceive of external realities altogether independent of ourselves,—realities that would remain realities if the human race were to cease to exist; but it is not possible that we can conceive our *knowing* those realities, without at the same time assuming that such knowledge has been attained either through intuition, observation, or reflection (of revelation I do not now speak); and the very moment the mind, or the mind's operations, or the mind's convictions, however universal or however necessary, are taken into consideration, we have not absolute truth, but only relative knowledge. Grant that there are intuitions, those intuitions can never elaborate *absolute truth*, but only *necessary credence*; and whether this necessary credence be itself correct, and be the true correlative of external reality, must ever remain an insoluble mystery (unless the solution be given by

revelation from the Infinite),—and this, not merely as a matter of *fact*, but as a matter of universal and logical *necessity*. For, let us suppose our faculties and our knowledge to be ten thousand times greater than they are,—any increment, in short, less than infinity,—and knowledge must (at least we necessarily conceive must) still remain *relative to the mind that knows*. No mind short of the Infinite can (according to the laws of our thought) be certain that its knowledge is other than relative to itself, and no *finite* experience could advance it one hair's-breadth,—nor can we conceive an infinite experience, there being always time to come. To speak, then, of what is not even possible in conception, is to speak of one equal to zero, which we cannot possibly conceive, and, therefore, need not dispute about. And in saying that such a mind cannot be certain, we do not mean that such a mind may not have a perfect *conviction*,—this it may have,—but we mean, that we cannot conceive it to have a *criterion*. If the criterion be subjective, the veracity of the knowledge must be subjective also; and if the criterion be objective, it can be no other than the Infinite Mind who informs the finite creature. This is the only *possibility*, the only case in which we can conceive the possibility of absolute knowledge being really *authenticated* to a finite mind. Let us turn the question how we will, we find that there is no other supposition nor scheme that we can even imagine, that shall supply a criterion of absolute truth to the finite, except a revelation, *subjective in its evidences*, and *objective in the matter of its truth*.

To say, however, that all our knowledge is *relative*, is a very different thing from saying that all our knowledge is *subjective*. In the latter case, thought is *the all*; we know our own *thoughts*, and beyond our thoughts we know nothing. In the former case, our knowledge is imperfect, incomplete, partial, finite, but, at the same time, it is knowledge; and, what is more, it is expanding, increasing, growing, ever approaching nearer and nearer to indubitable certainty. We grant freely that our knowledge is *relative*, but deny altogether that it is merely subjective. Our reasons will become more apparent as we develop the argument.

We have spoken of one meaning of the terms *objective* and *subjective*, but there is another meaning attached to them,—the meaning always intended, except by the partizans of the subjective philosophy. These terms are evidently *relative*, and if we endeavour to fix them down to concrete realities (man and the universe), we *certainly* entangle ourselves in inextricable difficulties.

We think not only of ourselves and of our relations to externals, but of externals, and *of their relations to each other*. And here, when the mind that thinks forms no part of the object of our contemplation, the triple relation is reproduced,—as in fact it is wherever the human mind is intellectually present. Relative terms may either be placed at the extreme ends of the scale of thought, or they may be made to slide up and down to any part of the scale. They are correctly used, provided the relation between them be preserved. Whatever ope-

rates is called *the subject*, and whatever is operated upon is called *the object*. Thus, in the most general form,—in the most extensive application,—the human mind is called *the subject*, and the external universe is called *the object*. Here the terms are at the extremities of the scale. But it is also true that the terms are employed relatively, even when we take into consideration only a very small portion of the external universe; for instance, the warrior striking is subjective, the warrior struck is objective, while *to us*, the spectators, *both* are objective.

A case of this kind, however, is attended with little difficulty, as the context may usually inform us of the manner in which the terms are employed.

But another case gives rise to many misapprehensions, and among others to the sceptical philosophy. We not only apply the term *objective* to what we suppose to be substantive realities, but to *thoughts*, to *abstractions*, to *generalities*, to sentiments, feelings, passions, and all the other internal substantives which language expresses by the noun. The noun substantive, in its generic character, implies an object of thought, and, logically, a relation or a quantity (things inconceivable by themselves, as far as *imaging* to the mind is concerned,) is as much an object as a mind or a planet. Whatever we think *of* is viewed as objective to the intellect; so that, when the mind *reflects* on itself, on its faculties, its operations, and the products of its operations, all these become as truly objective as the sun or the ocean.

Here, indeed, is a fertile source of ambiguity,

misunderstanding, and latent sophistry. Here the distinction between objective and subjective, except as mere relations, is annihilated ; for the mind, in becoming conscious of its own operations, in turning its attention to those operations, and performing on its own phenomena the same process of observation which it has already performed on the external world, becomes at once subjective and objective. And here, perhaps, we may find a clue to guide us out of some of the mazes into which a sophistical philosophy has endeavoured to mislead the world. Not that we profess to clear up all difficulties,—such, indeed, were beyond the utmost aspirations of our hope,—but we may, perhaps, by careful attention, succeed in showing that the sceptical philosophy is by no means so immaculate as its advocates have asserted, and as its adversaries have practically admitted, when they replied to very subtle analyses of thought, by referring to what is termed common sense. Common sense may settle our duties as *men*, but common sense can never find its way through those intellectual difficulties which are only to be overcome by the perfection of mental science.

The view to which we refer, as calculated to elucidate some part of the darkened subject, is found in this : let the mind look outward, and the mind is *subjective*,—that is, in operation. The *object* is then the external universe. To make this evident, let us arrange the terms in the following manner :—

SENSE,	} in operation	{ THE EXTERNAL
REASON,		

Now, it is evident, that it is only so long as the mind is exclusively bent on contemplating the world without, that the mind is entirely subjective. The moment it contemplates its own sense and reason, *sense and reason become objective*. Without making mental phenomena objective, there is no possibility of having the slightest *knowledge of thought*. There is thought, that is, thought in operation, but the whole of that thought, in its substantive element, is derived from without. Grant that the *form* of the thought is determined by the constitution of the mind, the whole of its *matter* is entirely and exclusively composed of externals; and such being the case, the only possibility of applying the terms subjective and objective, is between the various externals that are *thought of*.

Let us now make both the mind and the external universe objective—thus :

*Subject.*

*Object.*

SENSE,	}	in operation	{	A MIND thinking, and
REASON,				

Here both the mind and the external universe are objective so far as regards *us*, but if we conceive of *that* mind thinking of the universe, then that mind is subjective towards the universe. And it is *only* in this case that the term subjective can be applied to mind, because in the former case we did not take mind into the field of contemplation, and therefore could not speak of it. And, also, it is only in this case that we can have any *knowledge* of mind, or

mental phenomena. We can have no knowledge of any thing without directing our attention towards it, and thinking of it; but in that case, it is objective to us, whatever may be its relations to the other matters of our thought. From this, then, we conclude that the matter of all knowledge, whether of mental or of external phenomena, is on the same footing; that is, objective to the mind that thinks. We cannot apply the term *subjective* to the mind, without in the first place making that mind objective to us, so that, after all, subjective and objective are only terms to indicate (not what we call a *reality*, but only) a certain relation between the different matters of our thought,—between, in fact, *our ideas*. A slight matter to overturn man's hopes of immortality!

But, again,—for we have not yet done with the terms subjective and objective,—let us endeavour to view knowledge in another light, and from another point of view. We have endeavoured to prove that the substantive elements of all knowledge are necessarily viewed as objective. We can have no knowledge of *thought*, unless we have made that thought the object of our contemplation. Let us now endeavour to ascertain whether there be not a point of view from which all knowledge (both matter and form) becomes *subjective*. The realities, whatever they may be, remain the same; all that is altered is the mind's *mode of viewing*. *To us*, mind, thought, noumena, and phenomena, are all necessarily objective. The question may then be asked, What are their relations to each other? what category do they respectively occupy in that triple system of relation



which the mind carries with it, wherever it thinks, and wherever it gives rise to language? Having made the mind and the external universe objective to us, what is the relation of that objective mind to that objective universe? We speak not of realities, but merely of the mode in which the human mind views; and we ask the question, "Given an objective human mind, and an objective universe known to that mind, what is the character of the knowledge, subjective or objective?"

Here we may introduce some other terms which play an important part in philosophy. We know how much they *assume*, but no endeavour of man can escape from the *constant* assumptions of human language. The sceptic is here as powerless as the dogmatist. He can invent no expressions, and announce no propositions, which do not take for granted the objectivity of his knowledge at the very moment he is attempting to prove it subjective.

These terms are *reality, ideas, concepts, sensations, &c.*

Let us now figure our problem—

S.

O.

The mind	}	of the	{	A mind thinking of
thinking	}	objects.	{	the eternal universe.
<i>Subjective.</i>		<i>Objective.</i>		

Let the subjective mind be called the Mind S, and the mind which is objective to the Mind S be called the Mind O.

The question then is, What is the character of the knowledge in the Mind O, that knowledge being the knowledge of the external universe? Here we might

reply at once, that the knowledge in the Mind O is entirely and exclusively subjective; but in case it might be affirmed that it is, *of course*, subjective, *because* the mind thinks not of realities, but of ideas, let us examine a little closer. Knowledge is made up of ideas, but ideas of what? Of something which the mind conceives to be external to the intellect; and by *external* I do not mean local externality, but logical externality,—that is, that this external something is the object, and the intellect the subject. Thought, wherever it may appear, is viewed as a *product*,—as the product of subjective intellect acting on objective reality. And if knowledge be composed of ideas and the relations between them, then it is not true that when we think spontaneously we think *of* ideas, but that we think ideas; that is, that our knowledge may be analytically decomposed into ideas, substantive concepts, and their relations.

When we think directly of the external universe, we have no idea of ideas, but only of their matter; to us, all the matter of thought is objective, but as we do not take ourselves or our thinking into consideration, the only possibility of applying the terms subjective and objective, is between the respective matters of our thought. These we necessarily *class* into subject, object, product. When, however, we perform a reflex operation of thought, and figure to ourselves a mind *thinking*, as well as a material *thought of*, we think of ideas and of their relations, as well as of the objective materials of those ideas and of *their* relations.

In the former case (that is, when we think directly

as opposed to reflexly) there is no question of *reality and ideality*, the two are identified. All that we perceive or know is exactly on the same footing, and we may call it all a system of ideas or a system of reality. The name we apply to it makes no difference to the knowledge. It is all of the same character,—all a picture, a phantasm, an objective appearance, except that we universally carry with us the necessary forms of thought, among which is the triple relation of subject, object, and product.

When, however, we reflect, and take the mind into consideration, it is evident that a distinction is immediately and necessarily perceived (or made in conception) between the mind *thinking* and the matter *thought of*. Here we have the origin of the *distinctive* meaning of the term *reality*. Let whatever is external to the mind be termed reality, and whatever is internal to the mind be termed ideality. Let what relates to reality (what would, as we necessarily conceive, *remain* if the mind were removed) be termed objective. And let what relates to the mind—to ideality—be termed subjective; for such are the terms applied to the *thinking* and the *thought of*. In this case, as all knowledge is in the mind, or a modification of the mind that thinks, or a function of the conscious principle, all knowledge, of whatever kind or character, is *subjective*.

We have thus endeavoured to prove that all knowledge is *objective*, and that all knowledge is *subjective*. But what have we proven? Merely this, that from one point of view all knowledge may be *direct*, in which case *the idea is identified with the reality*; and

that from another point of view, all knowledge may be *reflex*, in which case *the idea is distinguished from the reality*. Knowledge remains the same in all its relative proportions; and whether we write a plus or a minus before it all, depends on the point of view from which we happen to survey it. Objective and subjective are merely *relations*, which we necessarily carry with us wherever we think; and to found the destiny of man on the more or less correct analysis of this process of thought, to delay seeking a home for immortality until we shall have unravelled every thread of the web which the mind weaves in its intellectual operations, is to risk an empire for the shadow of a grain of sand,—an eternity of holy knowledge, of holy affection, and of holy activity, for the discovery of a fact which, after all, can have no great practical result, and which, to the generality of mankind, would always remain unintelligible.

What, then, is the ambiguity that lurks under these terms—subjective and objective? (These particular terms are no more obnoxious to the charge of ambiguity than any others that might be substituted in their place. The ambiguity is not in the term, but in the mind that uses it. Any other terms would probably slide into the same various signification.)

These terms signify *a relation*,—they are relative; and any thing whatever may be either a subject, or an object, or both at the same time, although not in the same action towards the same thing at the same time. C may be the object of B, in which case B is the sub-

ject; but, at the same time, B may be the subject of A, and, consequently, it may be both subject and object. These terms, therefore, are abstract, and the error has been in rendering them concrete, by tying them down to realities, whose relations might vary, and whose characters, as subject and object, ought to vary also.

This tendency to convert the signs of abstract relations into the signs of concrete realities,—to fix abstractions to some stable object, and then to confound the abstraction with the reality,—is perhaps one of the most prolific sources of ambiguity, as it is indeed one of the most striking and universal frailties of man. To tie down the terms subjective and objective to the concrete realities, mind and the universe, is to endeavour to fix varying relations. It is no less unreasonable than to take an orange, an apple, and a pear, and to place them in such a position that the orange is the *middle fruit*, then to name the orange “the middle fruit,” then to change the positions and still to retain the name,—still to name the orange the middle fruit, even when the apple occupies the central position. Mind and the universe are subject and object only as we view them.\*

\* As we necessarily must allow to the senses a *passive* as well as an *active* function, the organ of sense is *the object* when acted on by an external agent. Thus, when light acts on the eye, sound on the ear, or heat on the nerves of feeling,—the light, the sound, and the heat, are the *subjects*, the senses are the *objects*; and so with the intellect. When evidence convinces the mind, the evidence is the subject and the mind the object. The mathe-

In this twofold manner of viewing mind and the universe, may be found the origin of the two systems,—Idealism and Scepticism. Idealism, looking directly at nature, identifies the idea with the reality; nor so long as we look directly outwards, does it appear possible for us to avoid the identification. This, then, gives us the Idealism of Bishop Berkeley.

Scepticism, on the contrary, looking at both the mind and the universe, asks, Where is the criterion of truth?—forgetting that when we make the mind objective, all that we can possibly ascertain is, What *does* the mind think? *not*, Is what it thinks *true*? Truth and falsehood are to be looked for *in the object*, and when we make *thought* objective, the only truth or falsehood into which we can possibly inquire is, *Does* or does *not* such and such a thought exist? To make thought objective, and then to ask if it be *true*, is to ask the wrong question, and one which, from the very terms, cannot find an answer. The proper question is, Is the thought *real*? When both the mind and the universe are objective, we might

matician, in giving instruction, always assumes that his demonstration has the power to convince; and he uses the demonstration as the convincing subject, the mind of the student as the convincing object. To say that man's intellect is necessarily the subject, is exactly analogous to saying that his organization is necessarily the subject when it is acted on by heat, by air, by galvanism, &c. Of course, we *may* consider the effect of the organization on the heat or on the air, but we can quite as legitimately consider the effect of the heat on the organization. This fact the subjective philosophy entirely overlooks.

as well ask, Is *motion* true? Is *action* true? as ask, Is *thought* true? Truth has no meaning in such a case, all we can ask is, Is *motion real*? Is *action real*? Is *thought real*? Is there such a motion? Is there such a thought?

When, on the other hand, Idealism asks, Is the object *real*? it also asks the wrong question. The question now is, What is truth? not, What is *reality*? When we survey the universe *directly*, all is either ideality or reality, there is no distinction between the real and the ideal, but only between the true and the false. The sun shines, or it does not shine; the wave rolls, or the ocean is calm; but whether it be a real sun or a real ocean, is a question which has no meaning, until we make the mind and thought objective, and determine what we mean by reality, —when we distinguish between the subject thinking, and the object thought about.

When we survey the universe *directly*, we carry with us our axioms, principles of classification, &c., in fact, our necessary forms of thought. All the materials of thought are obtained from observation (that is, the *primary* materials); but the mental forms enable us to arrange those materials in a regular co-ordination, which constitutes science. Science is the identity of the concrete material of thought, with the abstract form. Give us the material *alone*, and we have nothing but a substantive, and an isolated fact; give us the form *alone*, and we have nothing but an abstraction, and an abstract relation. Give us the substantives and the real relations, identified or com-

bined with the abstractions and the abstract relations, and we have positive science. All axioms used subjectively are necessarily true, because they are, in fact, no other than the conditions under which we think. But as soon as we view them objectively, we must cease to inquire whether they be true, and ask only whether they be real; that is, is this one of the conditions under which we think? This is a mere question of *fact*, which can only be settled by comparing the proposition with the expression of our own subjective thought, or by taking some knowledge that has been already obtained, and analysing it. If we translate the concrete knowledge into a more general form with which it is equivalent, and again into a more general form, until we at last arrive at a purely abstract proposition, which is, in fact, only the most general form in which the concrete knowledge (now no longer concrete) can be expressed, we have a proposition which represents the conditions of thought under which the knowledge has been obtained.

The whole mystery of idealism and philosophic scepticism lies in the double mode in which we may survey the universe. When we survey directly, we are idealists, and can only say what is true and what is false in the object. There is no distinction possible between the real and the ideal, because we take into consideration only the external universe, and all the knowledge, *quâ* reality, is exactly on the same footing. The sun shines or it does not shine. This is a question of truth and falsehood; but whether the sun be a real sun, we cannot answer until we



have made the mind objective, and learnt to distinguish between the thinking mind and the object thought about.

When we survey reflexly, and make knowledge an object as well as the universe, we distinguish between the thinking subject and the object of which it thinks, and, we say, let all that is objective to the mind be termed *reality*. Here the only question that can occur is, What is *real*, and what is *ideal*? not What is *true*? Every thing that we behold, whether relating to the thinking mind or its object is *true*, but that only is real which cannot be identified with the subjective thinking of the mind. This we take to be the distinctive meaning of the terms *true* and *real*.

It is now evident, however, that we have not made the *mind* real. The mind is yet only ideal. Let us now perform a third process, and, as it were, turn out *another* mind into the region of objectivity.

*Subject.*

*Object.*

SENSE, REASON,	}	contemplating	{	Mind thinking of a mind thinking of the universe.
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Here *two* minds are objective, and the one is real ; that is, distinguished from the thought of the mind that thinks of it.

If we confine ourselves *exclusively* to the *direct* mode of viewing, we give rise at once to ideal philosophy, because we can have no means of distinguishing between real and ideal,—these terms, in fact, having no meaning. But we learn what is true.

If, again, we confine ourselves exclusively to the reflex mode of viewing, we give rise to the sceptical philosophy, because we can have no means of distinguishing between the true and the false—these terms having no meaning. But we learn what is *real*.

To have both truth and reality, we must look from both points of view; and such we believe to be the common practice of the mass of mankind, who are neither idealists nor sceptics.

But how does it happen, that both of these systems have been considered logically unanswerable?

Because both have started from their respective premises expressed in language; and if we confine ourselves to either mode *exclusively*, we cannot in the one case provide evidence of reality, or in the other exhibit a criterion of truth.

To take a familiar illustration from an analogous case, let us for a moment contemplate the distinction between the abstract and the natural sciences. The mathematician deals exclusively in abstractions, and furnishes us with abstract relations which he tells us are necessarily *true*. Suppose we turn upon him and ask him whether they are *real*. He replies, "With reality I have no concern, I have to do only with abstract notions and abstract relations. *True*, I know they are; but whether there be any case of their reality, I leave those to discover who *observe* the world of reality."

Let us now turn to the man of reality, the naturalist. He professes to furnish us with concrete facts, and as we require a concrete fact relating to

*thought*, the only person who can supply it is the historian or the psychologist. The historian tells us, that some years ago the inhabitants of Europe thought that the sun went round the earth. We turn upon him, and ask him if such a thought were *true*. His reply is, "With the truth or falsehood of the thoughts which I record, I, *as a historian*, have no concern; I inquire only into the reality of those thoughts,—did men, or did men not, believe that the sun went round the earth? The truth or falsehood of the proposition I leave to the astronomer, or to myself when I am no longer a historian."

We have thus posed the mathematician by asking him for a *real* fact, and the historian by asking him for the *truth* of the credences he records. Shall we now turn round to the world and say, exultingly, "You see, gentlemen, that there is no *reality* and no *truth*!" Yet, by an analogous process, Idealism and Scepticism have imposed upon the world.

Extreme systems of philosophy, like extreme systems of every thing else, (in politics, absolute democracy, or absolute despotism; in painting, the Dutch school of realism, or the Italian school of idealism; in medicine, the homœopathic, or the allopathic theory; in geology, Plato or Neptune; in church discipline, apostolical succession, or independent assumption of the pastoral office, &c., &c.) originate in the fact of starting from partial and inadequate premises, which are assumed as *exclusive*, and in accepting the conclusions of these premises, because they have a logical dependence in language on the

primary assumptions. Any system may thus be *logical*. The danger is not in an erroneous process of reasoning, but in an inadequate collocation of premises. Spinoza may be as *logical* as Calvin or President Edwards, and Condillac as Berkeley or Hegel; that is, the conclusions may be legitimately drawn from the premises. But where were the premises obtained? If they are abstract, they can lead us to nothing but abstractions; and if they are concrete, the conclusions require to be constantly verified. Without verifying the conclusions, we can have no confidence in the premises; for in all matters of concrete reality, involving a function, *it is the verification of the conclusion that establishes the validity of the premises*.

All the abstract geometry in the world, for instance, can never teach us a *fact* relating to the heavenly bodies; and when we have taken our facts from nature, and deduced conclusions by geometric reasoning, those conclusions, wherever there is a function involved, must be verified before we can have confidence in the *concrete* premises we started from. Let the question be the measurement of the year. If we have measured the year exactly, we shall be able to tell at what moment of time the earth will have completed its respective revolutions for the years to come. But how do we *know* that we have measured the year correctly, for this is the premiss from which we start in predicting the earth's future positions. Are we satisfied with the mere computation, or do we not necessarily require to verify over

and over again whether the logical conclusion corresponds with the observed fact? Nay, may it not require many years of such re-verification, for our error may have been but small, and becomes apparent only when multiplied by a number of revolutions? It is only the correspondence of the continually observed fact that assures us of the correctness of our observations; that is, of the concrete premiss from which we started, to predict the future position of the earth.

But what then? Merely this: "*If the conclusion which follows necessarily from our premises is not authenticated by the real occurrence as we predicted it, then were our premises either false or inadequate.*" This principle is universally true in all scientific research.

To apply this to *thought*. Thought is a function; and if we start from any concrete premises relating to thought, we say that only those premises *can* be held as true, which are authenticated by the correspondence of the logical conclusion with the observed phenomenon.

If Bishop Berkeley start from premises which logically prove to me that I ought not to think of a substance,—a noumenon different from all the sensible phenomena of nature,—I immediately reply, "But I *do* think of such a substance, therefore your premises must be false or inadequate. Were your premises correct, I should never have had the conception of any thing save appearances; but I have a concept, a substantive thought, for the existence of which

your premises cannot account, therefore there must be some error in your data."

If, again, Scepticism tells me, by a most valid deduction from other premises, that I ought not to believe in the truth or falsehood of my mental convictions, I reply, "But I *do* believe; and if your premises cannot account for my so believing, your conclusion does not correspond with the observed fact, and your premises must, consequently, be erroneous or inadequate."

In both cases there must be the correspondence of the logical conclusion with the observed phenomenon, before we can give assent to the premises from which the conclusion is drawn. This correspondence is, in fact, the only possible *proof* that the premises are correct.

Now, let it be remarked, that we cannot remove from our minds the thoughts, *reality* and *truth*. No man can succeed in divesting himself of the thoughts, whatever he may have *done* with them. He might believe any thing true and any thing false, any thing real or any thing ideal, but that there is a truth and a reality, whatever it may be, every man as necessarily believes as he believes his own existence; and we must reject every theory of mind so long as this fact is unaccounted for,—just as we should reject the astronomer's dictum, were he to tell us that the sun ought not to be more than ten degrees above the horizon, when we actually observe him at his meridian altitude.

The practical test of our argument, and it is a

simple one, is this: "Ask the idealist to give you a definition of what he means by *reality*, and the sceptic of what he means by *truth*." As an idealist, he can have no conception of reality; and as a sceptic, he can have no conception of truth. The words are without meaning, absolutely unintelligible; they have no origin, no cause of existence, nothing that could produce them, no source from which they could spring; they can serve no purpose, contribute to no end, and enter into no argument;—because there is no thought to answer to them, and no reality or idea to represent them.

The conclusion, then, to which we would come is this: "Philosophy, instead of being a science that can teach us any thing about external nature (realities or phenomena), is, in fact, nothing else than the science of human thought (of *knowledge*); it really discourses of nothing *but* thought, and if it assume premises, which are incompatible with the existence of the stable thoughts that are found in the human mind, its premises must be either inadequate or false."

To suppose that any theory of thought should affect our belief concerning any thing *but* thought, is to depart from every principle of science, and to overturn the whole edifice of knowledge. Knowledge must be obtained *before* it can be made objective, and subjected to a critical process of analysis; but it is perfectly evident, that the only operation we can perform on it, is to analyse it into its substantive elements,—inquire what are the rela-

tions of those elements,—and determine the methods actually realised in science. To inquire into the truth of the knowledge, is to ask for something which we can never find by an inspection of the knowledge itself, but only by turning our eyes to the objects from which the knowledge has been obtained.



# BOOK I.

## SCEPTICISM.

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### CHAPTER II.

#### SPECIAL OBJECTIONS TO THE SCEPTICAL PHILOSOPHY.

[HAVING in the previous chapter considered the general doctrine of the process by which we arrive, first, at *truth*, and, second, at *reality*, I now propose, in two sections, to state the special objections to the Sceptical Philosophy. Section I. exhibits *how* the Sceptical Philosophy originates, and *why* its acceptance by any man in the world is *impossible*. Section I. may, therefore, be considered as the *philosophical* objection. Section II. enters into the special process of science (that which is admitted by *all* who study science, and which is *indubitable*); and here I shall prove, beyond the possibility of dispute (as I believe), that man *can* attain to a knowledge of *noumena*, of *causes*. In the whole history of philosophy there is nothing more remarkable than the fact, that philosophers have contented themselves with *opinions*, instead of appealing to the indubitable criterion of science. A little attention to the primary truths and methods of science will throw more real

light on philosophy, than all the professedly philosophic books that ever were written. Philosophy (as hitherto manipulated) is an attempt to do by *consciousness* that which can only be done by *criticism*.<sup>\*</sup> *Consciousness in philosophy* gives only *opinions*, criticism gives indubitable truths. Thus, if a philosophic dispute arise as to whether man can know causes (*efficient* causes), we say that all the *opinions* of all the philosophers in the world are absolutely without value, and that the question never *can* be settled by the dicta of philosophers. They may dispute for ever and be no nearer a termination, because their *method* is incapable of solving the question.

But, on the contrary, if we turn to science, we find a science *using* causes, measuring them more accurately than any physical substance can be measured, calculating with them, predicting phenomena with them, and knowing about them all that we can possibly *conceive* to be known; and we say, that if the causes cannot be abolished from the *science*, then can they never be abolished from the philosophy. In dynamics and physical astronomy, *causes* (*force*, the *cause of motion*) are absolutely necessary, and he who denies the necessity is incapable of learning the science of dynamics. But next to the mathematical sciences, which treat of number, quantity, and space, there is nothing more absolutely certain in their method and demonstration than the sciences of sta-

<sup>\*</sup> Criticism must not be understood as the criticism of *books*, or even of *systems*, but as the criticism of *knowledge*; that is, of science duly substantiated.

tics and dynamics, and the philosopher who attempts to obliterate *causes*, must first construct a science of dynamics without *force*. Philosophers, however, ignore this fact, or overlook it; they do not desire to be *taught*, but only to *teach*; and thus we have an endless, vain, futile, and absurd disputation about cause and effect, when the question could be answered beyond contradiction by an appeal to the science of dynamics. If we cannot know causes, there never *could* be a science of dynamics nor of physical astronomy; but surely it is too much to ask us to abandon the finest efforts of human genius, for the verbal disputes of men who acknowledge no standard, and appeal to no criterion. The systems of Hume, Brown, and Sir William Hamilton, are incompatible with a science of dynamics. The first was a malicious puzzle (scandalous in a man endowed with the gifts which Hume undoubtedly possessed); the second, a conceited casuistry; the third, a pious (but assuredly mistaken) endeavour to obviate a counter-difficulty. A single day spent in the study of dynamics, would have convinced either of the above authors that they must either *demolish the science or abandon their theories*; but science is the catholic truth of the human race, and when once established is immortal. We shall affirm, then, and prove, that science requires causes, and that *no* theory of causation can be admitted that does not acknowledge *positive* causes, and man's power to know and measure the same; and here we may point out what is the true nature of a genuine philosophy. It is not, as Locke supposed (or rather got credit for supposing, for Locke, out of

his philosophy, was very far from a sensationalist,—the reverse, in fact; see his treatise on Government,) a science of sensation; nor, as Descartes supposed, a science of consciousness; nor, as Kant supposed, a science of the reason;—but it is *a criticism of knowledge*; and the question is, Where is knowledge to be found?

To criticise consciousness, gives us only individual experience; to criticise the reason, gives us only the measure of the thinking faculty; but to criticise *knowledge*, gives us a genuine and true philosophy, as indisputable as the knowledge itself. Kant was the first who fairly announced that philosophy must be found in criticism, but Kant asked the wrong question. He asked, “*What do I know?*” instead of “*What is known?*” In the former case, we are naturally driven back on our own powers of cognition; in the latter, we objectify knowledge, and from the knowledge itself infer the powers and capabilities of the thinking faculty. In the one case, we are without a criterion, because we have returned upon ourselves; in the latter case, we have indisputable truth to commence with, and have only to ascertain how much it is really worth, and what it can teach us.

Knowledge (direct and spontaneous) is to be found in *science*, and philosophy, properly understood, is a *critik of science*.\* Science is *achieved knowledge*, and achieved knowledge is the proper element to start with when we ask the question, *What is known?*

\* I use this term, because neither *critique* nor *criticism* expresses the meaning.

Science must *first* be settled before there can be a philosophy; and as science has as yet only a limited region of undeniable truth,—extending over a wide field, it is true, but piercing as yet but a small way into nature,—philosophy cannot be perfected in the present age, but only *begun*. Its foundations may be laid securely, but its edifice can only be reared very gradually, as science opens up each new department of nature, and hands over her treasures of accumulated truth, to be built into the catholic temple of knowledge, that at last shall contain the whole human race. Thus, the doctrine of the absolute and the infinite may be taken from arithmetic, algebra, and geometry, and argued *there* with incomparably more propriety than in the region of theology. The doctrine of discrete quantity originates in arithmetic, the doctrine of continuous quantity in algebra, and both meet in geometry. The doctrine of *causation* may (nay, *must*) be taken from dynamics, mechanics, and chemistry; *classification*, in all its various forms, will be found *realised* in science; the power or impotence of the mind to posit substantives hidden from mere sense, can be at once determined in astronomy, chemistry, and electricity; and the true value of an argument from *analogy* can here be tested by genuine experience.

Nor is it at all necessary to study the internal details and complex propositions of each science to ascertain its philosophic value; the philosophic value is contained in the primary and elementary propositions, not in the far-off demonstrations. The philo-

sophy of geometry is all contained in the *definition*, the *axiom*, the *method of theoretic demonstration*, and the *method of problematic solution*. These will involve analysis, synthesis, and classification, and these are the contributions of geometry. Dynamics contributes *force* (cause and effect). Mechanics and chemistry contribute induction and deduction applied to causes and effects; and so forth. Political economy contributes, *necessarily*, the first commencement of psychology; for it must have *some* theory of *motive*, *will*, *intelligence*, and *final cause*. And thus science will furnish the *elements* of a genuine philosophy, which shall no longer delight in the vanity of speculation, or the vague uncertainties of consciousness. Philosophy, if she will achieve a fruitful labour, must no longer wander in the unrestrained freedom of imagination, but harness herself and work. She must learn to learn before she can learn to teach. She need tell us no more what she *thinks*, for this can advance us nothing, but what she *knows*, and what we can know if we will follow her method, and what all men can know if they will study. Philosophy is nothing more than the abstract form of science, but *what* that form is, can only be determined by an attention to science itself. Philosophy, to be indisputable, must be built up from the earth, not drawn down from the clouds; and though, like the tower of Babel, she can never reach to heaven, she has not failed if she only teach us the necessity of the ladder which the patriarch saw in his vision.]

SECT. I.—§ 1. *How the sceptical philosophy originates.*—The sceptical philosophy originates in this fact, that only *one* man is taken into consideration; and it is concluded, that what *one man* cannot know, *that* the race together cannot know.

The conclusion is false, the premises are inadequate.

It is said “that a crowd is no taller than the tallest man in it;” and catch phrases of this kind are sufficient to satisfy the simple, who see the truth of the proposition, and utterly mistake its application. The crowd is immensely *stronger* than the strongest man in it. The sceptical philosophy as regards *one* man, is (to the extent of some of its major propositions) *true*. Had it not been in some sense true, it could not so seriously have imposed on men of great ability. As regards *two* men, it is false; and as regards the race, it is so utterly false, that it can only be maintained by shutting out the idea of the existence of the race.

*First*, I shall consider that I alone exist,—that there is no *other* man with whom I can communicate. I behold nature, and I have a multitude of diverse impressions. I see images, I hear sounds, I smell perfumes, I feel cold and heat. The universe is to me an image, I think it *not myself*. I reflect on what I know, and now I discover that what I am conscious of, is *a change in my own condition*. I am a sceptic; beyond myself I know nothing.

All the phenomena of which I can be conscious in my solitude, are phenomena of my own conditions;

beyond myself I cannot go; I long to pierce the mystery of my existence, but I cannot overstep the inevitable condition of my nature; I shriek for knowledge; I am Prometheus bound—at the mercy of the vulture.

But, again, I live in two worlds; one that seems in its main features the same to-day that it was yesterday, but even it changes; the other that seems to be *another* world, the world of day and wakefulness, the world of night and sleep. What are these visions I see in my dreams? why do they ever vary and do not return? I cannot know; the question is insoluble.

But again. I sleep by a marsh; I awake anxious, fearful, tremulous; I wish life to be gone for ever. I am in the first stage of *fever*. I sleep again,—and again I am in a new world,—a fiery world of tumultuous life; vision after vision coursing headlong before my consciousness. I see them palpably; I feel them, they strike me; I cannot move; I am overcome with terror; whither can I flee? Again, I sleep. I awake to the old world, which to me seems only an old memory; I am feeble from my combat of the *other* world. What where those visions I saw? They are no more, but *where* are they? I know not. Wretch that I am, I know *nothing*. I am, I must be a sceptic.

Such is, indeed, the method of scepticism,—taught us, however, not in this plain style, but with many sounding words and great appearance of wisdom. It is true, that if only *one* man had been, he never could



have *known* what was real and what was ideal,—out of the circle of his own impressions he could not go.

Let us now, however, suppose, that instead of one man there were twenty men, and that they had a language in which to communicate. At first, when they *see* each other, each is only a phenomenon of the other's sensation. They hear each others' voices. Still only sensation. But a light breaks on them; they *understand* the meaning of the words. *Now*, the problem is to be solved. What do *you* see? What do *you* feel? What do *you* know? These run rapidly through the assembled men, and gradually truth begins to dawn upon all. "I thought," says one, "you were a phenomenon of my consciousness." "Nay," replies the other, "I thought *you* were a phenomenon of *my* consciousness." And so with all. Each *had* thought that the nineteen were phenomena of his mental condition; but each of the nineteen claims a personal existence, and will, by no means, allow himself to be obliterated by the sceptical doctrine of the others. What do they believe *now*? They believe that each is a man, a mind, a person similar to themselves.

But now for the dreams. One sleeps, the others watch. The sleeper sees his visions, the others see nothing, but the stable nature common to them all. The sleeper awakes, and asks if they had seen his vision. Not at all. It was, and he *now* believes it, only a phantom of his own. Another sleeps, and the last sleeper watches. He now learns for himself that no vision is to be seen, although his com-

panion on waking describes *his* experience of the dream. One takes fever, and sees the drama of delirium. The nineteen watch and see none of it. He recovers, and though no image is more vivid or more certainly apparent to our consciousness than the illusion of delirium, the convalescent acknowledges that it was a phantom, quite distinguished from the stable rocks, rivers, and trees, that *all* can see. Scepticism disappears, until some philosopher arises, who thinks to enlighten himself by attempting to darken all other men.

It may be supposed that we have granted *too* much in allowing that a single man could not attain to a clear knowledge of more than his own perceptions. Perhaps; but we wish to give the sceptical view its fullest prominence; and, also, it must be remembered, that the supposition of a single man is out of the question, since children are born by ordinary descent from parents who are necessary to care for the children. An infant cannot *live* unless cared for by others, and these questions are settled for all practical purposes in our early youth.

§ 2. To show, however, that the sceptical philosophy, which denies objective existence, cannot be accepted, it is only necessary to ask how it would *work*. I am sure that *I* am, and you are sure that *you* are. But if you wish to persuade me that man can know only his own impressions or thoughts, I must be only so much of your thoughts; that is, I am not, except as you think me. To this I, of course, cannot agree; for on the same principle *you* are not,

—you are only so much of *my* thought. The existence of the *me*, the *self*, is incapable of obliteration ; and every system that would land in such a conclusion is a mere logical vagary,—a theory that cannot possibly be true, because it does not account for the facts. We hold it to be a principle of universal truth, that a system or theory that will not work in the region which we *do* know, is utterly useless when carried into the region which we know so much more imperfectly. As Condillac so well observed, and so beautifully illustrated in his creation of algebra out of a few logical principles,\* “*we rise from the known to the unknown;*” but if we start with a principle that is perfectly absurd in the region of the known, what possible importance can we attach to it in the region of the unknown ?

And thus it is with this sceptical philosophy : it will not work even on the showing of its professors ; for they acknowledge that they learn from other men, or refute the errors of other men, or write for other men. But how can these *other men* exist at all, if scepticism be valid ? Such a system is preposterous. It advances that *you* are not, and yet it wishes to convince *you*. It says, “Fellow-man, I come to convince you that you do not exist ; you are only a phenomenon of *my* thinking. Now, attend to my arguments, and I shall convince *you*,”—that is, you the phenomenon.

\* Condillac actually performed this task, and threw more light on the nature of algebraic quantities, than is perhaps to be found in any other work. (See his *Langue des Calculs*.)

The sceptical philosophy, then, resolves itself into this alternative :—

Obliterate all *history* ;

Obliterate all *literature* ;

Obliterate all *argumentation* ;

Obliterate all *mankind except yourself* ;—and

Be a sceptic.

Or,

Admit the existence of other men (as all sceptics necessarily *do*), and

*Obliterate scepticism.*

If any man, therefore, will accept from Hegel and the German philosophers the doctrine of subjective scepticism, or absolute idealism, he, in the first place, accepts the fact that Hegel is only a mental phenomenon of his (this man's) *own thinking* ; and, second, he accepts the doctrine, that he himself does not exist at all as a person, but only as a consecutive series of thoughts. But no man *can* accept from another his own obliteration ; and, consequently, it is not possible for any man to accept consistently the sceptical philosophy.

## SECT. II. THE ARGUMENT FROM SCIENCE THAT MAN CAN KNOW CAUSES, (NOUMENA.)

§ 1. We shall consider it proven that man can attain to a knowledge of more than phenomena, if we prove that *causes* are absolutely required in science.

Here we have not to frame a proof, but only to point out a proof patent to all the world.

We affirm, and that without fear of contradiction, that a **POSITIVE CAUSE** is required in dynamics, in physical astronomy, and in mechanics. We therefore maintain the following propositions:—

1st. That this *cause* is universally admitted by scientific men, and considered as the first necessary item for the explanation of phenomena. Without the cause there can be no *science*.

2nd. That this *cause* can be *measured* with an accuracy greater than can be attained in the measurement of any physical substance.

3rd. That this *cause* can be *calculated* with, and that it enters as a known substantive item into scientific calculations.

4th. That by aid of this *cause*, phenomena are not only explained, but *predicted*.\*

A substantive that can be positively measured and calculated with, and to which we can assign values,

\* Aristotle having assumed *four* causes—the *material*, the *formal*, the *efficient*, and the *final*, it is necessary to point out the fact, that if the word *cause* be used in this extensive sense, it must be considered synonymous with the word *requisite*. Thus we should say, “What are the *requisites* necessary for the existence of a thing?” Answer, 1. The *matter* of which it consists. 2. The *form*, and the determination of the characters that constitute that form. 3. The *producing cause* or dynamic agent that created, first, the matter, or, second, the form. 4. The *end* or purpose for which it was made. Nothing can be more admirable than this division; but it is necessary to take the word *cause* in a *generic* sense. Each species answers a distinct question. 1. *Of what?* 2. *Through what characters?* 3. *By what agent?* 4. *For what end?*

In the text I use the word *cause* as, of course, *efficient cause*, and

varying from any value more than nothing, to any value less than infinity, cannot be said to be *unknown* to us. This is the case with *force*, the *cause of motion*.

Before proceeding, however, to prove the necessity of positive causes *in science*, it will be proper to explain the circumstances that have led to the *denial* of positive causes. We find two classes of men denying the power of man to apprehend causes: 1st. The empirical man of science; and, 2d. The speculative philosopher.

If the reader have fairly fixed in his mind the fact, that knowledge may be either *direct and spontaneous*, or *indirect and reflex*, he will have no difficulty in perceiving how both of these classes may deny positive causation, and yet how both may be *wrong*.

In the first place, the empiric or materialistic sceptic is obliged to *use* causes. He cannot make dynamic calculations without the admission of *a cause*. In all his operations, he is absolutely compelled to proceed on the supposition that force is *the cause of motion*. So long as he proceeds spontaneously *in the science*, he works like other men,—always admitting *force* and *forces*, and using these as the substantive elements of calculation. He now reflects. He has

mean by it A POSITIVE DYNAMIC AGENT, not a system of phenomenal antecedents, nor a “negative impotence,” as maintained by Sir W. Hamilton. Sir W. Hamilton’s doctrine is untenable in physical science, for there we require *positive* causes. Had he divided his doctrine into two portions, a negative *and* a positive, his theory would have been more correct.

the physical faculties of the intellect in large predominance, or, at all events, in active operation. He *perceives* solids, liquids, and gases, and the changes they undergo; but he does not *perceive* the cause: *ergo*, the cause *is not*. He proceeds to frame a materialistic philosophy, and to call things by new names. He escapes from the actualities of science, and lands himself in a discussion of the *terms*. He now assures us that man can only know what he calls *facts*, and that the pursuit of science is the pursuit of *laws*, and that forces are not to be considered as *causes*, but only as "*effects*" (!) (I shall prove this by special quotation hereafter.)

We must remember, however, that the authority of a man of science is in his *science*, not in his reflex view of his own operations. Here he must be measured by the standard of his *philosophic* ability: and we need not wonder that many of the second-rate cultivators of physical science should fall into this species of scepticism, because we know that any object that is long and exclusively considered, assumes an unnatural and improper prominence in our thoughts; and thus the cultivator of matter-science comes to deny the existence of any thing but matter, and the mystic the existence of any thing but mind. The idealist, who devotes himself exclusively to the *subjective* phenomenon, abolishes matter with as free a hand as the empiric abolishes all that is *not* matter. Those who pursue direct and spontaneous knowledge, may have little or no power to trace reflectively the route they have pursued, and when

we find them in their *philosophy* contradicting the very first principles of their *science*, we can only regard the fact as originating in some intellectual imbecility, that really prevents them from apprehending the *abstract* character of their mental operations. The empiric, then, denies causes from his defective powers of reflection. *He ends in materialism.*

The speculative philosopher arrives at this conclusion by a different route, but not altogether in a dissimilar manner. He starts from the other end of possible thought. The empiric began with *matter*, and ended there. The philosopher began with thought and ends with thought. He commences with the ultimate abstractions, *space* and *time*. He finds himself at a particular point of each of these great categories: the *here* in space—the *now* in time. But on every side of the *here*, space is limitless, without even a conceivable boundary. And before the *now*, and after the *now*, time is limitless,—endless duration is on either hand. He can conceive no absolute commencement either for time or for space,—the absolute is beyond the reach of his utmost faculty. He sees a flowing of phenomena, an unfolding of endless succession, a perpetual birth, an unceasing springing into being of new forms of actuality. He thus regards, from his higher point of view, all things as relative—as phenomenal. The universe is not *the seen*, but only the everlasting *seeming*. He also rushes to the conclusion, that man can know only phenomena; and, overlooking the positive methods of *science*, he tells us that we can know



nothing of *causes*, but must confine our knowledge to the measure of mere coincidence and succession. *He ends, not in materialism, but in phenomenalism.*

Now, either we must abandon the indisputable methods of science, or we must conclude that both the materialist and the phenomenalist are *wrong*. I affirm that science *does* know causes, and now proceed to the proof.

The question is, “Does *force*, and force as *the cause of motion*, enter into our knowledge, or are we necessarily limited to the knowledge of mere *fact*, which, when generalised, becomes *law*?”

I affirm that *force* is as patent, genuine, and legitimate a part of our knowledge, as is any thing whatever. It may be invisible and intangible, but it is measurable, and can be calculated with, and has its laws; and the human mind can make (and has made) a science of force, even more perfect than any physical science whatever.

First, of the definition of force.

Force is usually defined as *the cause of motion*, or as *a power exerted on matter to move it*,—such, at all events, is the meaning of the definitions, whether in these or in other words. This proposition—*force*, equal to, *cause of motion*—is true as a proposition, but it is inadequate as a definition,—a circumstance that appears to have been overlooked by many writers on mechanics. So far as motion is concerned, the proposition is correct enough: *force is the cause*, and the only cause of motion; and, wherever motion is, it is the effect of force. But force is more extensive

than motion, and a formally correct definition ought to account for those cases of force where there is *no* motion,—namely, cases of equilibrium produced by antagonistic forces.

We must, therefore, say that force is the cause of motion, and the cause of the neutralization or compensation of equal opposing force.\* The latter clause of the definition, however, should come first, and it would account for *static* science; the other clause would account for *dynamic* science.

Let us now establish that, in dynamic science, force is *the cause of motion*.

EMERSON'S *Mechanics*.—Definition, "Force is a power exerted on a body to move it."

LAPLACE, *Celestial Mechanics*.†—Definition, "Any immediate cause of a change of motion is called a force."

SIR JOHN HERSCHELL, *Discourse*. — "The first great agent which the analysis of natural phenomena offers to our consideration, more frequently and prominently than any other, is *force*. Its effects are either, 1st. To counteract the exertion of opposing force, and thereby to maintain *equilibrium*; or, 2d. To produce *motion* in matter."

\* Sir John Herschell (whose accurate philosophy is as remarkable as the elegance of his method and the amount of his acquirements) has very plainly announced this view of force, which, though generally taken, is not sufficiently expressed by other writers.

† *Elementary Illustrations of the Celestial Mechanics of Laplace*: London, 1832. A work containing much elegant criticism on the use of terms.

DR WHEWELL, *Hist.*, 2d Sec., vol. i. p. 388.—“It will be recollected that the *formal* are opposed to ” (not *opposed to*, rather *distinguished from*) “the *physical* grounds of a theory, the former term indicating that it gives a satisfactory account of the relations of the phenomena in space and time,—that is, of the motions themselves,—while the latter expression implies further, that we include in our explanation the *causes* of the motions, the laws of *force* and matter.”

The next quotation shall be from a source that may startle the sensationalists; from no less than the great expositor of the sensational system, the Abbé Condillac, a writer whose really great powers have scarcely been appreciated in this country.

CONDILLAC, *Logique*, chap. 5, “*Des idées des choses qui ne tombent pas sous les sens* :”—

“By observing sensuous objects, we rise naturally to objects which do not fall beneath our senses, because, according to the effects which we see, we judge of the causes which we do not see.

“The motion of a body is an effect; it has, therefore, a cause. It is beyond doubt that this cause exists, although none of my senses enable me to perceive it, and I name it *force*.”

Many more quotations might be adduced, but as they would only be the repetition of the same proposition, that *force is the cause of motion*, and that motion requires *force* to produce it, we may proceed to consider the *operation* of force.

One word, however, on *the authority* of science.

Any truth, satisfactorily established by science, is not to be overthrown by speculation. The philosopher has no option but to accept the truths of science, unless, indeed, he can succeed in *proving in the science* that what was taken for a truth, is either an error or an unnecessary assumption. Science, indeed, is the sure groundwork of philosophy, and the authority of science is that which ought to preserve the philosopher from those endless disputations that result from his having no certain and acknowledged basis. If, as a philosopher, I deny a proposition, not only generally admitted in science, but actually used in its ordinary calculations, and never contradicted either by the experience of fact, or by any imperfection resulting in calculation, it is not only illegitimate, but utterly absurd, that I set my own presumption against the patient labours of those who have devoted their lives and energies to a special branch of knowledge.

Science, then, is authoritative, so far as philosophy is concerned. Philosophy must not alter or impugn the truths, but accept and use them. But what can we possibly say to those who, arrogating to themselves a species of peculiar claim to be *the* scientific philosophers, actually abandon the very primary truths of science, falsify them, distort them, and deny them altogether? This is done by M. Comte, Mr John S. Mill, Dr Lardner, Mr G. H. Lewes, and the other present and extant writers of the materialistic school.

LAPLACE.—“*The most certain method that can guide us in the research of truth, consists in rising, by*

*induction, from phenomena to laws, and from laws to forces."*

EMERSON.—“For all the difficulty of philosophy \* consists in this : from some of the principal phenomena of motions to investigate the *forces of nature* ; and then, from these forces *to demonstrate the other phenomena* ;—all of which is to be done upon mechanical principles. Thus, from the distances and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, the forces of gravity are derived ; and from these forces, thus known, *are deduced* the motions of the planets, comets, the moon, and the sea, as well as the motions of bodies upon the surface of the earth.”

SIR JOHN HERSCHELL.—“On those phenomena, which are most frequently encountered in an analysis of nature, and which most decidedly resist further decomposition, it is evident that the greatest pains and attention ought to be bestowed, not only because they furnish a key to the greatest number of inquiries, and serve to group and classify together the greatest range of phenomena, but by reason of their higher nature, and because it is in these that *we must look for the direct action of causes*, and the most extensive and general enunciation of the laws of nature.”

NEWTON'S three laws of motion (from Wood's *Mechanics*):—

1. If a body be at rest it will continue at rest ; and, if in motion, it will continue to move uniformly forward in a right line, *till it is acted upon by some external force*.

\* Emerson uses the term *philosophy* in that peculiarly English sense which restricts it to physical science.

2. Motion, or change of motion, produced in a body, is proportional to the force impressed, and takes place in the direction in which the force acts.

3. Action and reaction are equal, and in opposite directions.

We have here, then, evidence of the highest scientific authority,—evidence which, even by itself, might fairly be considered indubitable, but which, when backed by another consideration (the *use* of force in dynamic calculation), leaves the question beyond the possibility of dispute. In a question of the philosophy of science, there is no higher authority than that of Sir John Herschell; and his precise statements may be considered as so many contributions, which physical science, in its highest and fairest form, has made to the theory of mental operation.

*Force*, then, is the cause of motion; and, in physical research, we arrive not merely at a generalised *fact*, or *law*, but at a *cause*, with which cause we proceed to operate when our induction is completed, and we commence the process of *deduction*.

Let us now observe to what shifts those writers are driven who attempt to evade the doctrine of positive causation. For this purpose we select one passage from Dr D. Lardner's *Mechanics*. This passage may be taken as the representative of a system, taught and maintained, not only by Dr Lardner, but by many English and French writers of the sensational school.

Dr Lardner has made the discovery, that force is not a cause but an *effect*, and he pretends to use it as

such in his scientific treatise. I say *pretends*, for it is sheer pretence,—he *does* not so use it, and cannot.

DR LARDNER, *Cab. Cyclo.*—*Mechanics*, chap. i. p. 7 :—“ Force is generally defined to be ‘ whatever produces or opposes the production of motion in matter.’ In this sense it is a name for the unknown cause of a known effect. It would, however, be more philosophical to give the name not to the *cause*, of which we are ignorant, but to *the effect* of which we have sensible evidence.”

P. 49.—“ When a certain phraseology has, however, gotten into general use, it is neither easy nor convenient to supersede it. We shall, therefore, be compelled, in speaking of motion and pressure, to use the language of causation, *but must advise the student that it is effects and not causes which will be expressed.*”

Now, what proposition can the reader possibly suppose comes directly after the announcement, *that it is effects, not causes*, which will be expressed? The very next words are :—

“ § 74. If two forces act upon the same point of a body, in different directions, a single force may be assigned, which, acting on that point, will produce the same result as the united effects of the other two.”

This proposition (which, although I do not pretend to enter on the internal matters of science, I apprehend to be *false*, because, if we suppose the forces opposite and equal, we can assign *no* single force that would produce equilibrium) is quite sufficient to explode the remarkable discovery, that forces

are effects, not causes. Let us, however, accept the doctrine, and translate the proposition into language suitable to the theory. Thus :—

“ If two *effects* act upon the same point of a body in different directions, a single *effect* may be assigned, which, acting on that point, will produce the same result as the united effects of the other two (effects).”

Is it possible for nonsense to go farther?

Now, let us consider force as a *cause* :—“ If two causes act upon the same point of a body in different directions, a single cause may be assigned, which, acting on that point, will produce the same result as the united effects of the other two (causes).”

But not to base any thing on a verbal disputation, let us take up the proposition as a matter of mechanic science.

The proposition is the well-known theory of the result of two forces, acting on a single point, in the direction of the non-parallel sides of a parallelogram.

Let A B D C be a parallelogram, and let a moveable point at A be acted on by two forces, one of which would move it from A to B in a given time, and the other from A to C in the same time. The motion will be in the direction A D, and the point will arrive at D in the same time.





that it would have arrived at B or C had either force been acting separately.

This proposition is the first proposition of mechanics that contains all the elements necessary for the argument.

Now, we suppose, it will be granted on all hands, that *motion* is the *result, effect, fact, or phenomenon* subjected to observation, and that *force* is *not* subjected to direct experience. Let us, then, suppose that we know only *effects*. It is plainly evident that there are not two *motions*, but only one motion. There is *no* motion in the direction A B, *no* motion in the direction A C, but only a motion in the direction A D.

What, then, is it that is in the direction A B, and in the direction A C? It is no fact, no effect, nothing that can be *observed*; it is a *force*, a *cause*, and without this *cause* the proposition can never be exhibited. Newton did not consider this as the composition and resolution of *motions*, but as the composition of *forces*. "A body describes the diagonal of a parallelogram by two forces acting conjointly, in the same time in which it would describe its sides, by the same forces acting separately."

But to escape from the generalities of dynamic science, let us take a great and intelligible *fact*—the earth's motion round the sun, or the moon's motion round the earth. These motions (it is universally admitted by every writer on astronomic science who adopts the Newtonian theory) are the results of two *somethings*, one of which is tangential,

the other, centripetal. Now, if forces are only effects, and man can do nothing but generalise, what possible use can there be in introducing into science things of which we have no possible experience? In the moon's motion there is no tangential motion, and no centripetal motion—there is only an *orbicular* motion. There is no straight line in the question; and if motion be in the straight line of the force, there is no possibility of assigning a force to the moon's motion, and, consequently, no possibility of connecting it with the fact of gravitation. The moon does *not* gravitate towards the earth's centre (*as fact*), neither does the moon exhibit (*as fact*) any of that tangential something which astronomers are compelled to use in their calculations. Every calculation, with regard to the motions of the planets in their orbits, is obliged to proceed on the assumption that there are two (or more) *forces* present, neither of which can be observed in fact, but which we must necessarily admit, so long as astronomical science cannot be made without them.

But again, if force could by any possibility be considered as an effect, why not obliterate it altogether from dynamic science? for motion and equilibrium are the only effects, and those terms ought to be sufficient, if we can know only effects. So far from this, however, the calculations are made with *forces*, and with forces as *causes*, and this in the very works which assure us that forces are not causes. No sooner does any writer (even Dr Lardner) attempt to construct an argument, than he is com-

pelled, and compelled invariably, to use force as a *cause*, for in fact the argument cannot be constructed without it. I might adduce hundreds of quotations, but the fact is so notorious, and so perfectly patent to every one who takes the trouble to inquire, that it is only necessary to state the fact. The whole science of dynamics proceeds on the admission, that forces can be as distinctly estimated and reasoned with, as any of the other substantives that enter into the calculations.

§ 2. When, however, we endeavour to estimate the writers who have advocated the subjective philosophy, we must draw a great broad line of demarcation between those who, by their own conscientious researches, have arrived at the conclusion that man's knowledge is what they term subjective, and those who, incapable of comprehending the full import of that view, adopt it only so far as it may serve a purpose. Kant, who affirmed the *total* subjectivity of knowledge, thereby proved, if he proved any thing, that it makes no difference whether we regard *the whole* of our knowledge in one light or another; and of all men he was the true model of an honest seeker.\* So little of bias does he manifest, that he seems not to wish any thing to be either true or false, but calmly waits to learn what *is* true. With a comprehensive mind of the highest order, and with that peculiar genius for abstraction which enabled him to sail his aerial way far above the reach of ordinary men, and to be at home in the cold and desolate

\* The same remarks apply to Sir W. Hamilton, who, for the most part, follows Kant.

regions of the higher atmosphere, where he could mark and survey the boundaries of the world of knowledge, he holds on with untiring perseverance, and catching a glimpse, as he thought, of the edges of the world, with the infinite unknowable beyond, he descends, not with the solution, it is true, but with the panorama of a solar system, which made all previous systems sink into terrestrial limits. His word was, "Friends, it is useless; I have seen the region beyond, and seen that it cannot be attained. Do right, love justice, obey the dictates of your moral monitor, and wait in hope for the other manifestation." And surely these are not idle words, coming as they do from one gifted as Kant was; and surely such a man is not to be confounded with the petty casuists, who, in the puppyism of their own vapid insipidity, would desecrate all the highest feelings of our nature, and all the highest aspirations of our hopes,—who, with their one-eyed, tortuous, and ambidexter sophistries, would fain rob poor human nature of the fair ideal that one day shall be turned into perfection. Kant was the true astronomer of philosophy, who saw our world of thought sinking into insignificance when he bent his gaze on the peopled firmament, boundless even to imagination,—*they* are the grovelling earth-worms who dwell in darkness, and will not see the light. In Kant, the piety of nature found an earnest and an able advocate,—*their* cry is, "Crucify all morals, and break all bands asunder." Truly, such men are not to be classed together.

§ 3. Let us, then, endeavour to fix down what we can know of *causes*.

1. We can know that they *are*. Force is the cause of motion.

2. We can know their qualities. The force of gravity is a uniformly accelerating force.

3. We can measure them with greater accuracy than we can measure any physical substance whatever. The force of gravity is in the inverse ratio of the square of the distance. This character of force seems to be common to the other causes of physical phenomena, namely, that they follow *perfect* mathematical ratios. This is a very singular fact, and proves beyond a doubt the harmonious construction of *nature* and *reason*. The ratio is entirely a matter of the *reason*, utterly independent of the existence of matter. So many thoughts, for instance, would have originated arithmetic quite as well as so many fingers or so many pebbles. Now, no *observation* is ever absolutely perfect; for instance, the mechanical measurement of the circumference of the circle is rejected by every geometrician as unworthy, and thus the measure of *the force* is actually more perfect than the measurement of any physical substance. The actual measurement of spaces and velocities are only sufficiently near approximations to inform us that a force of such a definite character is *there*. The errors are corrected by analogy.

4. We can calculate with them, explain phenomena with them, predict phenomena with them, and use them for the practical purposes of life, with as

much accuracy and facility as if we had them in a bag and carried them about for use. Also, we can extend them from the facts that revealed the force, to other facts of another kind. Motion, for instance, reveals force, and then the doctrine of force can be applied to equilibrium. The fall of bodies to the earth's surface reveals gravitation, and then the doctrine of attraction can be applied to the moon and the planets. Thus we can know their *function* (including action and reaction).

Now, I ask, what more can we possibly know? *Existence, quality, quantity, relation, and function*, constitute all that we can possibly know of any thing. What *more* can we know, nay, what more can we *conceive* to be known? and if we cannot conceive more, surely no sane man can ask more.

But another, and by no means unimportant consideration, may be noticed. *There is no physical substance in the world of which we know as much as we do of FORCE, the cause of motion.* Take even one of the simple substances of chemistry—gold, for instance. You know that it *is*, you know its qualities, you know its measurements in weight, in size, in form, &c., and you know *something* about its functions. But you cannot *calculate* with it in the same complete manner in which you calculate with *force*. At some future time the *force* signified by gold may be as accurately ascertained as the force signified by matter, considered as a mere mass; but it is not yet ascertained, it is only undergoing its process of discovery. And *when* ascertained, it will

be the *force*, and not the *gold*, that will be calculated with. The substances of nature are only expressions revealing forces and causes of various kinds. Almost the only thing we know of the planets, in addition to their sensible motions and size, is the exact quantity of force which they exert one on the other; and, certainly, we know the law of the force even more accurately than we know any thing else concerning them.

Hence, it is proven that we can know causes, and can know concerning them all that we can *conceive* to be known. The fact that we know of force, the cause of motion, all that we can conceive to be known of a cause, is indubitable evidence that causes are not beyond our cognition, and that we have only to pursue onward and onward to find out the other causes of nature. Let those who gainsay this, first construct a science of dynamics *without force*, and force *as the cause of motion*, and then—but not till then—will it be necessary to look for some other proof, “*that man can know causes.*”

We “rise from the facts to the law, and from the law to the cause;” and from the cause and the circumstances we deduce phenomena.

Hence, then, we conclude that the Sceptical Philosophy, whether it assume the form of subjectivism, which denies all save the phenomena of consciousness; or the form of materialism, which denies all save the phenomena of sense (and these must ever be the two grand divisions of a sceptical method);—we conclude, I say, that the Sceptical Philosophy

is utterly contradicted by the plainest and most certain facts of our knowledge, and by the indubitable truths of science. If we are not willing to obliterate the existence of all other men save ourselves, and the existence of force from the science of dynamics, then is it absolutely certain that we can attain to the knowledge of objective existence, and to the knowledge of super-sensible *causes*, which we can know, measure, and calculate with, and without which dynamic science is impossible.



BOOK II.



PANTHEISM.



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### PANTHEISM.

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#### § 1. WHAT is Pantheism?

At every moment of time the universe may be viewed under two aspects.

First, We may ask, What is extended *in space*? of what is the universe *composed*? Second, We may ask what operations, changes, and sequences take place *in time*.

The first inquiry asks, What is the universe *substantially* or statically?

The second asks, What is the universe in its *eventuality*?—what is the potential or *dynamic* universe?

In *space* we observe properties, qualities, or appreciable attributes, and by a law of our reason we *infer* substance.

In *time* we observe changes (events), and by a law of our reason we infer *cause*.

If we assume that *all* apparent properties are properties of one and the same *substance*, we are static or substantial Pantheists; and if we assume that *all* events are only the operations of one and the same *cause*, we are dynamic Pantheists. In the latter

case, the term *fatalism* is usually employed. Fatalism is only dynamic Pantheism.

Materialism assumes that all that is, is *matter* which functions according to its laws.

Pantheism, on the contrary, assumes that matter, and all else, is only a manifestation of an immortal energy or primordial force, which is improperly termed *God*.

Materialism makes *nothing* God.

Pantheism makes *everything* God.

The difference is unimportant, for both agree in obliterating all that can be called morals, and all that can be called religion.

Various schemes of argumentation, advanced by Christian or theological writers, are *logically* pantheistic, although no such conclusion would have been acknowledged, and, certainly, was neither intended nor desired. At the same time, it is necessary to remark, that a train of thought intended to obviate one difficulty, is apt to be expressed in such strong language that *the language* supports *the opposite error*. Hence some Christian writers, under an earnest desire to magnify God's grace, and to point out man's inability, have fallen into expressions which can scarcely be cleared of the charge of Pantheism; and this charge *has* been made against them. So far as regards the *writings*, the charge is, perhaps, fair and proper, if intended as a critical caution; but, as regards the *men*, the charge is probably altogether out of place. The writings are pantheistic, but the men—not so.

It is true that there may be difficulties—perhaps insuperable difficulties—in the way of reconciling to our own limited reason the doctrine of *will* with the doctrine of a first cause, or, indeed, with the doctrine of a universal causation. These difficulties we freely acknowledge. We do not intend to deny them, to understate them, or to avoid them. On the contrary, for a full understanding of the phenomenon, they must be fairly estimated, duly appreciated, and calmly weighed; they must be taken in the measurement of their full proportions, and when so taken, they will be found as the terminal barrier in one direction. But however great these difficulties may be, they refer only to *one* side of the phenomenon. They belong to one particular region of human cognition, in which we are universally constrained to admit the law of causation in its full plentitude. Without that law we cannot reason, so long as we confine our attention to this one region. In it we regard all things as an endless flowing derived from an immortal cause, and the minutest change in the minutest particle of the universe as involved in all the previous changes and causes which have preceded,—up to the very origin of matter itself. Fortuitous or causeless events we neither conceive possible in actuality nor in thought; for if we were to conceive chance as any thing more than a rude expression of our own ignorance, we should have no difficulty in conceiving that the whole universe might fall to pieces,—that order, harmony, and relation might utterly disappear, and that all knowledge and all reasoning might sink

into a disorderly aggregation of unconnected thoughts. Such, however, we cannot conceive, except only as under the very same conditions that produce harmony, namely, under the influence of causation. We can easily conceive what we now call order to sink into what we now call disorder; that is, we can conceive every particle of matter as separating from its fellow and pursuing an independent course of its own, without a link to bind it to its peer. We can picture the whole material universe as crumbling into formless chaos, and no longer following any recognisable law of sequence. But what we *cannot* conceive is, that this mighty catastrophe should take place without a cause, or without the withdrawal of one of two causes, the other of which would produce the apparent confusion. The doctrine of causation is an irrevocable necessity for man, and no effort he can ever make will deliver him from its universal authority over all his thoughts, in one region of cognition. So long as we confine ourselves to this region, we are *de facto*, Pantheists,—that is, we actually *do* consider all phenomena as primordially determined by God, and all events as only the manifestations of the Divine energy. Whether or not we consider a variety of *substances* is really of little consequence, for if there be only one *power*, and that absolutely irresistible, the whole phenomena are truly pantheistic.

But this is only *one* view of our cognisable world. There is another (one that brings an equal though opposite imperative,—one where our conception of causation undergoes an entire modification) where

it has, superadded to it, a conscious intellect and conscious choice,—where we carry with us (as necessarily as we carried with us the idea of determinate causation in the *other* region) *the conception of volition*. I do not say “of *free* volition,” for this term is ambiguous, and, in one sense, means more than we require—but of *volition*, of *will*, of conscious selection, determination, and operation; and here our universal doctrine or scheme of causation is overlaid by another scheme, that introduces an entirely new series of judgments, and involves an entirely new theory of action.

This region is the region of *morals*, of *responsibility*, of duty, of obligation, of *the ought* and *the ought not*, of crime, of punishment, and of reward. Into this region we carry with us an entirely different class of thoughts and emotions from those to which we were confined in the previous region. *There* we were the intellectual percipients of phenomena, ever evolving under laws, and ever attributed by us to causes which left no possible result, save that which actually occurred. *There*, the potential causes and the static conditions being *given*, the result must follow, as being potentially contained in the antecedents. *There*—there was no contingency, no possibility of deviation, no conscious will, no moral judgment. All was the perpetual flowing of development, under the influence of fatalistic power.

*Here*, on the contrary (and the whole history of man, savage or civilised, bears out the fact), we enter on entirely a new field of cognition, emotion,

and conscious action. We never regard, and no nation ever regarded, the whole scheme of human life as constructed upon a fatalistic principle, which leaves no room for choice, and no opportunity for conscious deliberation. All human language gives utterance to this truth, and all human institutions, that are based on man's relation to man, are constructed on the principle, that man is more than a fatalistic or passive mechanism. Not that man is *free* in the full and unrestricted sense of that term, but that man is in *some sense* free,—the voluntary agent determining his own actions, and, consequently, responsible for those actions. Hence the reasonableness of *law*, and *laws*, and moral *rules*. All law (and wherever man is found, law is found, even if it be only some rude instinctive law or custom relating to person and property) originates in this very fact, that man is not blindly and irrevocably determined to specific actions which he cannot possibly avoid—but that he has a certain though limited power of control, which enables him to refrain from the commission of certain deeds, and to engage in other actions which are not prohibited by the laws or customs of his surrounding fellows. Were we to obliterate the whole mass of this law and custom, which originates in the clearest acknowledgment of man's responsibility, and is *based* on man's responsibility, the whole of human society, as it now exists, would fall to pieces, and the social world would sink into a pandemonium, abhorrent to the reason, and revolting to all the higher sensibilities of our nature.



And, be it remembered, *law*, in its proper and higher meaning, is not merely for the purpose of *punishment*, but also, and more especially, for the purpose of *instruction* and *direction*. It points out to those who are willing to do well, the actions they ought to perform, and the actions they ought not to perform. It is thus not merely for the restraint of the evil, who are resolutely bent on doing wrong and can only be restrained by terror, but it is also, and very especially, for the guidance and direction of the whole mass of society, which, by *obedience*, may illustrate in real and outward manifestation the wisdom which dictated the rules and precepts. Thus the very highest form of created existence—that of pure angelic love and holiness, that of the ministering spirits, who do His will and have not fallen from their first estate—is the very condition in which there is *no* punishment, and yet the very highest possible exemplification of *law*. Law, therefore, in its highest sense, is the expression of the Divine will, the rule which God has given for the regulation of the universe: in the physical universe the irresistible law of absolute determination,—in the animal world the law of instinct, combined with the first faint glimmering of something that approaches to reason,—and in the moral world, where the large gift of a reasonable soul has been bestowed, the *moral* law.

The universality of social law among men is the best possible proof that man feels, knows, and admits himself to be implicated in a scheme which is *not*

fatalistic in the sense of Pantheism. Pantheism assumes that all manifestations are only the unfoldings of Divinity, the outward expressions of *the same* identical energy, or potential substance, or substantial potency. It regards all that *is*, not as *sustained* by God, but as *being* God; and all actions not as performances which are permitted or even pre-ordained, but as being the very actions of the divine potency outwardly realising itself in the actuality of fact.

Now, in meeting this pantheistic doctrine (which, it is almost needless to observe, is subversive not merely of the Christian faith, but of all morals whatever,—that is, of all moral *doctrine*, for a Pantheist may lead an orderly, and, in many respects, moral life), we must carefully guard ourselves from the vain attempt to solve the major difficulties of philosophy. It is not at all necessary that we should be obliged to explain what the true theory of the universe is. This is not in the least requisite for a full and impartial refutation of the pantheistic scheme. We may be quite unable to establish a positive theory that shall explain the whole mystery of human belief, of human life, and of human action, and yet we may be quite as able to show that the pantheistic explanation is *erroneous*. We may not be able to prove what the *right* theory is, and yet we may be able to prove that any one given theory is *wrong*, because it will not account for the facts which we know to be indubitable.

§ 2. Let us, then, endeavour distinctly to appre-

hend where the pantheistic theory fails, remembering always, that a theory, or a philosophy, or a speculative doctrine, is only a *human* reading of the universe. No theory originated by man endeavours *to establish* truth, it only endeavours *to explain* to the reason a certain scheme, which, *if* true, would account for the actual phenomena. And every theory or philosophic doctrine must be measured by this one principle, that if it can explain *all* the facts it *may* be true, but if it cannot explain all the facts it *must* be false. Hence, philosophy may, in one sense, be considered not as the pursuit of truth, but as the pursuit of error,—as the human effort to destroy and abolish those systems of belief which have imposed on mankind, and which are proven to be false immediately we can adduce facts that will not square with the imagined explanation.

Let us, then, determine the regions of thought and knowledge where Pantheism might possibly be true, and those in which it must necessarily be false.

Here the same distinctive method that guided us in our criticism of Scepticism, will aid us to understand the fallacy of Pantheism, and, at the same time, to detect the secret of its power.

Let us, then, consider a single man, placed in the presence of Nature, contemplating natural phenomena, and attempting to devise a rational theory of the universe. This man observes the flowing changes of the external and objective world. He beholds a perpetual unfolding of phenomenal appearances, and his reason necessarily posits a *substance* and a *power*.

With his eye he perceives what he calls matter ; but on a closer investigation, he is constrained to acknowledge that he cannot detect the essence of matter, but must confine himself to a systematic record and schematic mensuration of the changes. He sees only the surface of the universe—not the universe itself. He knows that there must be something *more*, something *under* the phenomena, something which the eye detects not, something immortal and invisible, some potence or energy which is manifesting itself in the outward forms of creation. He then asks, “ What is this potence ? ” He knows not, he cannot discover, it perpetually evades his subtlest inquiry. Still, his reason must find some answer, as his whole belief must be a chaos unless he base it on some substance,—substance being an intellectual necessary of rational thought. A universe of mere phenomena is an impossible universe,—that is, impossible to thought; and whatever result may be arrived at, there must be some substantiation of a real essence, for without the supposition of a real essence, it is impossible to believe in the existence of phenomena.

Here, then, is the origin of the pantheistic doctrine, which, as regards the *material universe*, is by no means so erroneous or so refutable as some writers suppose. That is, the pantheistic doctrine being a theory, and the human reason acting under the law that we should posit nothing *superfluous*, we are intellectually constrained to admit *as few* substances as possible. And in *this* region, where we

behold only the operation of absolutely fatalistic laws, it is not *a priori* necessary that we should posit more than *one* substance, which one substance unfolds or manifests itself in a multitudinous variety of *forms*. The argument, so long as we confine ourselves to the merely fatalistic universe, is good enough for all the practical purposes of belief; that is, the theory is sufficiently feasible,—and, be it remembered, sufficiently *simple* (simplicity having always a great attraction for the multitude);—I say the theory is sufficiently feasible to satisfy the craving of the intellect, and to allow it to entertain a species of belief that it has found a basis on which to erect the universe of phenomenal change.

Here is the position. So long as we contemplate the material or fatalistic universe, it makes no difference to our belief whether we separate the power from the substance, and conceive the substance as acted on by an intelligent power; or whether we conceive the power and the substance as *identified*, and merely unfolding itself by its own energy. The very same conclusions will follow in all the *after propositions* of our belief. In either case we shall behold only a series of fatalistic phenomena, over which *we* have no control, and in either case we might fold our hands and drift along the course of time to an irrevocable destiny, wafted by fate—hope being vain, and fear altogether superfluous.

In our rejection, then, of the pantheistic theory, we must calmly and carefully estimate the sphere in which it *might* have been correct, and instead of in-

veighing against it as if it were a personal offence against ourselves (a practice only too common), let us rather endeavour to expose its insufficiency, and to lay bare the reasons why it *cannot* be true.

The question with Pantheism is not, then, whether it might possibly be a good and sufficient theory in one region of cognition, but whether there is another region in which it cannot possibly be true. This question is not as to the validity of a scheme, but as to the existence of a vast region of necessary thought, of which man, as man, cannot divest himself, under any circumstances, in any nation, or at any period of time. The whole question of Pantheism resolves itself into this: Is man confined to the knowledge of a universe where all events take place under absolutely fatalistic laws?—for in *that* case the pantheistic theory would be actually *sufficient*; or, Is man universally obliged to acknowledge another universe, in which he admits the existence of *will*, the sentiment of *justice*, the emotion of *conscience*, and the fact of *responsibility*? If the cognisable universe be entirely fatalistic, then the pantheistic theory is as good as any other; but—and here lies the whole question—*if there be a moral universe*, a region in which man pronounces a moral judgment and exerts a moral will, *then* is the pantheistic theory necessarily *false*.

The existence of a moral universe is, then, the grand refutation of the pantheistic scheme. Out of the moral region, the pantheistic theory might have been tenable,—within the moral region, it fades into a deceptive fable; and man, no longer the mere con-

templator of inevitable changes, springs at one bound into a higher universe, where he is endowed with the destinies of responsibility. No longer a mere reflective intellect, he becomes a *moral agent*, and carries with him all the accessory thoughts, language, and institutions, which the fact of his being a moral agent necessarily implies.

If this view be correct, it should explain to us *where* we should find Pantheism, and where we shall certainly not find it. Pantheism originates in the exclusive contemplation of external and fatalistic *Nature*. Hence it will be held theoretically, only by those who devote their attention to the phenomena which are regulated by fatalistic laws. We may find it in the region of the physical sciences,—we may find it combined with a science of matter, with astronomy, with geology, with natural history, with the lower anatomies of the world, with a material doctrine of man, with a degrading form of psychology, and, in fact, wherever it is possible to carry out the idea of fatalistic law. Natural history, taking that term in its widest sense to include the whole region of material nature, is the peculiar home of the pantheistic scheme; and hence, if we find Pantheists at all, we shall find them among those men who devote their attention to natural science. Such, indeed, is the fact. Pantheism is found among men of science in Germany, in France, and to some extent in England. It is a deification of the object of their pursuit,—it is, in fact, the philosophy of the material and fatalistic world. So

long as man fixes his eye on physical nature alone, he may, perhaps, consistently maintain a pantheistic doctrine.

It is quite otherwise, however, when we come to the world of *man*, and inquire into human relations. The moment we turn to the social world of men, the pantheistic chart is folded up, and a new and more complete map of the universe is opened out before us. The pantheistic scheme could go no farther than the bare outline of the osteology of the world,—the new chart must clothe the world with its living tissues, and animate it with a vitality of a totally different character from that of mere passive obedience to fatalistic force.

Let us turn, then, for a moment to the social world. Here we find the *Family*, the *State*, and *Humanity* at large. In the Family we have the relation of husband and wife, of parent and child, of brother and sister. In the State, we have the relation of citizen to citizen, of elector to elected, of legislator to subject, of executive ruler to nation, &c., &c. In the social world of Humanity we have the relation of man to man,—of man to woman and to child. We have those relations which are *unspecified* by positive laws; we have the relation of friend to friend,—of man of honour to man universally,—of rich man to poor man, independently of race or country,—of man who can aid to man in distress,—of man who has information to man who wants information, &c., &c.

Now, in every one of these regions, and in every



one of these relations, there is a peculiar *something* which was not found in the objective world, and which something entirely obliterates the possibility of man adopting as a general belief the pantheistic theory. And the best proof of this is, that the moment we bring the Pantheist out of his region of nature into the relations of social life, he does always and invariably abandon his theory of nature, falls in with the common belief of humanity, and by his *action* sets his seal to the proposition that man is a moral being and has moral *duties*. The whole history of man bears out this fact. Wherever man is found, *there* will be found some tacit or explicit law, rule, or custom, to infringe which is deemed a crime, or an offence, or a *wrong* action, which merits the penalty of a painful infliction, varying in degree from the mere disapprobation which affects the moral feelings, up to the deprivation of liberty, or even of life itself.

All human language is constructed on this moral principle, and all the instinctive emotions of our nature bear witness to the fact, that we *cannot* obliterate the distinction between right and wrong. Theoretically we may attempt to do so, by the mere trickery of logic, which is no more worthy of serious consideration than the legerdmain of the skilful trickster who deceives our very senses; but the moment we come to the actualities of life, and express our real belief through the most palpable of all expressions, namely, in our actions, we do universally and necessarily establish moral distinctions, and

hold man to a greater or less extent accountable for those volitions which he reduces to overt acts. Without *will* there could be no *crime*; and so evidently is this principle perceived by all men, that the very moment a human being, through the misfortune of mental aberration, comes to be acted on by irresistible forces, that moment we account him no longer responsible, and except him from the moral law, because he is *impelled* to act, and no longer selects his actions.

From this moral world it is impossible for us to escape. We may reduce our rules as low as we will, and extend our latitudinarianism as far as we possibly can, but ultimately there will always be found *some* moral distinctions, and some moral laws; and these, however imperfect they may be, are always sufficient to establish the fact, that man does not, and cannot regard himself as implicated in a pantheistic scheme, where all phenomena are the mere exhibitions of the same ultimate or primary energy.

Let us now consider in what *manner* the existence of a moral law destroys the possibility of a pantheistic doctrine of the universe. So long as we contemplate the objective and fatalistic world, it is possible for us to entertain the supposition that matter is actuated by a divine force, and if we confine ourselves exclusively to matter, it may be impossible for us to draw a substantial distinction between the matter itself, and the force that causes it to function,—that is, we may be compelled to draw a *logical* distinction, and to reason with the

power and the substance as two separate terms or items; but it may be quite impossible for us to draw a *material* distinction, and to pronounce that there is more than the mere matter itself, which functions according to its own inherent power or energy. We may say consistently (and in the very language of modern science), "the matter is the force," and all matter is only localised and partial force, capable of resisting or overcoming other force. And though these forces may act in opposite directions, and appear to *contend*, we can have no reason for establishing such an antagonism as should justify us in saying, that there were more major substances or powers at work, than the mere *one* of which we suppose the universe to consist. The *result* of the apparent contention may be as Divine as either force separately, and the contention may be only the means by which the result is produced or secured. So long, in fact, as we do not turn to the realm of *mind*, we may wander in a pantheistic universe without being able to establish the existence of any separate intelligence *really* distinguished from the operating force.

In the *moral* world it is otherwise. Here we have the categorical imperative of conscience,—the absolute supremacy of a law which knows no mitigation of its requirements, and admits of no contending principle. It is true that men may differ as to what items do actually constitute that law, but this is only a proof of man's ignorance and darkness. Such a diversity is a *secondary* question, and cannot affect

the major proposition of the moral world; for so soon as we have admitted any thing whatever to be *right*, or any thing whatever to be *wrong*, in the moral sense of obligation and responsibility (and all men and nations make this admission), we have then and thereby admitted the universal imperative which establishes a moral universe, and draws the distinction between the Infinite God and the created creature.

The categorical imperative presents itself in this form, that whatever may be man's *desire*, there is, over and above the desire, a *duty*, to which, in all cases and all circumstances, the desire *ought to give way*. Such is the fact on which the whole moral world is based, and such is the fact that obliterates the possibility of a pantheistic doctrine of the universe. The admission of obligation is the admission of *law*; and the admission of law (which is absolutely universal wherever man is found, however imperfect it may be,) is the admission of a power higher than man, from which power law emanates; and the admission of a *moral power* is the admission of a distinction between the finite who owes the duty, and the Infinite to whom the duty is owed;—and, consequently, any moral law whatever is utterly destructive of Pantheism.

Let us consider,—

*First*, A moral law cannot exist without *will*.

*Second*, A moral law must *emanate* from a *will*.

*Third*, A moral law must be addressed to a *will*.

*Fourth*, The will to which the moral law is

addressed, must be endowed or combined with conscious intelligence.

*Fifth,* A conscious intelligence endowed with will, or a will endowed with conscious intelligence, constitutes an individual *personality*.

*Sixth,* The PERSON giving the law, is essentially distinguished from the person receiving the law.

*Consequently,* if there be a moral law at all, the universe is *not* pantheistic :

But, man cannot possibly escape from the admission of a moral law : (This is the necessity of *fact*, or *material* necessity, as distinguished from *logical* necessity.)

*Ultimate conclusion.*—Consequently, the universe *to man* cannot possibly be pantheistic.

Such is a brief summary of the mode in which the admission of a moral law destroys the pantheistic doctrine.

But let us also consider how this argument completely destroys that pantheistic argument, which pretends to make a demonstration by starting from the idea of *substance*. This argument (presented with great logical power by Spinoza, who, in all probability, was really imposed on by his own subtlety) assumes, that there can be but *one* substance, which is *self-existent*, and of which all phenomena are only the manifestations.

Now, let us essentially distinguish the *natural* universe from the *moral* universe, and we shall see

that the argument is perfectly irrelevant, and never reaches, nay, never approaches, the very question which man requires to solve,—namely, the *mental* relation between God and man. We shall criticise this point, and show that even if a pantheistic argument were perfectly irrefutable in the region of objective nature, it would entail not one conclusion affecting man's relation to the Divine Being.

Here we shall be obliged to discourse of subjects where man has no direct *knowledge*, and where he is only enabled to operate intellectually in general terms, and through the general propositions of the intuitional reason. We shall make the largest possible admissions, and, for the sake of refuting this subtle argument, shall even venture to speak of things which otherwise we should not have approached.

The case is this:—

There is a phenomenal world, which is extended in space;

There is a mental world, which is protended in time;

The phenomenal world requires a substance (by a law of our rational thought);

The mental world also requires a substance.

The whole of the pantheistic argument lies in the word *substance*; and, to show its fallacy, *we shall admit it to be true, in the whole objective region of nature*. Of course, we do *not* admit it to be true, there or elsewhere, but we shall admit it by supposition, for the purpose of showing that, even if it *were* true, it

proves *nothing*. This point is philosophically important, therefore we shall approach it in plain terms.

Let us admit (merely by supposition), that the substance of the objective and phenomenal world is universally one and the same, that there is but *one* substance, and that the phenomenal world is pantheistic.

Let us even go farther; let us admit (only by supposition) that the substance of matter is *the same* as the substance of *mind*, and, consequently, that the natural universe, including both matter and the substantial essence of mind, is pantheistic: I say, let us even admit this; and *yet*, we have proven nothing to the purpose, and have not established one single point that need shake our faith in the Christian revelation.

Let us remember, that of *substance* we know directly *nothing*. So long as gold *manifests* itself in a different manner from silver, it makes no possible difference to us whether it be or be not of the same essential substance. And so long as mind is endowed with a consciousness which distinguishes it in our apprehension from matter, it makes no difference *what* the natural substance of mind is. It is not the *substance*, but the *consciousness* that constitutes the value of mind, and draws with it those responsibilities which give to man his destiny. Let the natural substance of the human mind be what it may, let it be the same or different from matter, let it be any thing we can imagine, let it even be *nothing* in the material sense,—that is, let it be *unextended*, and have no place in the universe

of space; and *yet*, so long as it retains its *consciousness*, it is a *mind* absolutely distinguished from matter, and absolutely endowed with a personality of its own. *It is this PERSONALITY which is the real substance of the moral world*; and so long as it is retained, it matters not one iota what the natural substance of the mind is or is not. It is the intellectual consciousness and *power of volition* which constitute all that we understand by *mind*,—the power of *thinking* and *willing*; and whether the power of thinking and willing reside in, or be attached to, any extended substance or no extended substance, is a question which never for one moment affects those *moral* relations and intellectual perceptions which constitute the essential *life* of the human mind. Let us even suppose, that in the centre of each man's brain there was found a small piece of gold, and that (if such were possible) we had perfectly sound evidence that this piece of gold was the actual substance of the soul, *yet*, if we retained our intellectual and moral consciousness, it would be a matter of utter indifference whether the mind was gold or silver, green or grey, material or non-material. So long as man is endowed with *mental life*, so long as he retains his intellectual and moral consciousness, so long as he perceives reasons with his reason, and originates actions with his will, so long as he holds moral rules to be imperative on his fellow-creatures and on himself,—*so long* is mind distinguished from matter, so long is the mental universe *not* pantheistic, so long is God distinguished from his creatures, and so long is man only the finite



intelligence and moral agent, bound *to obey* the moral law which God has given.

Hence, then, we conclude that this pantheistic doctrine, which starts from the idea of *substance* and ends in a blind fatalism, which is to all intents and purposes *atheistic*, is only *a fallacy of transposition*. We may as well speak of a square mile of domestic affection, a yard of honour, or a bushel of antipathy, as attempt to apply the material doctrine of substance to the region of intellect and moral emotion. The realm of material nature is ever essentially distinguished from the realm of mental nature, and no logical subtlety can ever bring the two realms one hair's-breadth nearer together. Matter consists of extension, resistance, and power to act on other matter in space. Mind consists of intellectual consciousness, emotional desire, and moral volition ; and *whatever* may be true of matter, does not affect mind in any degree, so long as mind retains its attributes and comes under mental laws. Matter is a substance—mind is a soul ; and so long as man retains his personal and spiritual consciousness, he feels and knows that he can never identify himself with matter. Nor, on the other hand, can any sane mind pretend to identify itself with God. True, from God we have our being, and in him we live and move, by him we are sustained, and without his power we should sink into nothing and forgetfulness. But it is as agents responsible *to* God that we live, and not by any means as partial manifestations of Divinity. We are divine in our creation,—finite and human in ourselves,

—infinite in our origin, yet mortal in our nature,—of heavenly birth, yet of the earth, earthy,—divine, as being the works of God, yet finite, dependent, erring, the creatures of the dust, and the creatures of a day, fleeting through our terrestrial probation,—in our thoughts darkened,—in our actions sinful and rebellious,—yet in faith the children of God,—and in our hopes immortal.

BOOK III.



THE A PRIORI ARGUMENT.



## BOOK III.

### THE A PRIORI ARGUMENT.

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#### SECT. I. THE ARGUMENT STATED.

THE *a priori* argument may be described as a philosophical attempt to prove, that the admission of the Divine Existence is a logical necessity *to the human reason*.

As an argument purely rational, this argument is only the statement or enunciation of a necessary form of thought: as combined with a single assumption of *fact*, it is the statement of the conditions under which we view the cognisable universe.

In its most extensive form it has three bases, each of which is supposed to direct to a similar, or, perhaps, rather to an analogous conclusion.

The first basis is the conception of EXISTENCE—of *being* in general, viewed in its most ultimate and abstract forms.

Here the argument proceeds in this manner:—

*First.*

*Necessary division.*—*Being* must be either self-

existent or not self-existent. Let the first be called *necessary*, the second *contingent*.

All Being then,—all existence of whatever kind,—must be either necessary or contingent. Then,

*Philosophical necessity*—All contingent existence must depend upon and be derived from necessary existence. (Because nothing cannot originate something. Existence is *positive*; and nothing, or the negation of anything, cannot originate a positive.) Then,

*Logical necessity*—If there be contingent existence, there *must* be necessary existence. Then,

*Single assumption of fact*—There is contingent existence.

*Conclusion*—Consequently, there is necessary existence, or something which subsists in and by itself. Or,

*Converse conclusion by negation*—If there be *not* necessary existence, then is there *no* existence, there is no universe, there is nothing.

### *Second.*

The second portion of the argument bases on *substance*. Thus,

*Necessary division*—All Being must be either substance or quality. (In *language*, subject and attribute; in *material*, substance and quality.)

*Philosophical necessity*—All quality or attribute must depend upon, or be attached to, a substance. (Because *nothing* cannot support a quality. A quality is positive; and nothing, or the negation of anything, cannot support a positive.) Then,—

*To connect substance with previous argument,—*

*Substance* is self-existent, or necessary, and

*Quality* is not self-existent, but contingent.

*Logical necessity*—If there be quality, there must be substance.

*Single assumption of fact*—There is quality, or appearance, or phenomenal manifestation, or phenomenal consciousness, &c.

*Conclusion*—Consequently there is substance—which, by previous argument, becomes—"There is a necessary and self-existent substance."

*Converse conclusion by negation*—If there be *not* a necessary and self-existent substance, there can be no quality; and if there is neither substance nor quality, there is *nothing*. (The same reduction or ultimate alternative that resulted in the former case.)

### *Third.*

The third portion of the argument bases on *causation*.

Causation may be viewed either as *static* or as *dynamic*.

As *static*, we may view the possible universe in the fact of *being*, and say all that *is* must be either uncaused, or caused in its *existence*.

As *dynamic*, we may view the possible universe in the fact of *operation*, and say all that *begins to be*—all *change*—must have a cause.

In the latter case we take *time* into consideration, in the former case we do not consider time.

*Necessary division*—All existence must be either uncaused or caused.

*Philosophical necessity*—All caused existence must depend upon, and be derived from, an uncaused existence.

*Logical necessity*—If there be caused existence, there must be uncaused, or self-existing, or necessary existence.

*Single assumption of fact*—There is caused existence.

*Conclusion*—Consequently, there is a causeless, underived, or necessary existence.

*Converse conclusion by negation*—If there be not an uncaused and necessary existence, there can be no contingent existence, and, consequently, there can be *nothing*.

Such are the three forms which this abstract argument may be made to assume. Each brings us to this alternative: either that there is nothing whatever, or that there *must be* some underived and self-existent positive existence. At this point, however, (and even much farther) the argument is only the barren outline of our own mode of conceiving existence. The argument might, in fact, be presented as an exposition of the mind's necessary operations, quite as much as an exposition of the necessary existence of God. It is not a *theology*, for a theology requires *a person*; it is only the abstract preparation of the human reason in its approach to the theologic idea. Before it can assume speciality, it must be linked with the conception of



reality, and then it confers on reality qualities of the utmost importance, which qualities could not be found in reality itself.

We shall, therefore, consider how this abstract argument can begin to connect itself with *the real*.

This it does through the medium of the two primary conditions of reality, namely, SPACE and TIME.

SPACE is distinguished from *nothing*, inasmuch as it is the condition of material existence. We cannot conceive matter, except under the condition of its occupying space. Also, assignable portions of space can be measured and compared, &c. Neither of these affirmations is true of *nothing*. Nothing is not the *condition* of any existence, nor has it assignable portions. Space, therefore, is radically distinguished from pure negation.

Thus, then, we begin to prepare for reality.

*Necessary division*—All space is either *finite* or *non-finite* (infinite).

*Philosophical necessity*—All finite space must be only a portion of infinite space,—*infinite* being taken in the sense of no limit being capable of conception by the reason.

*Logical necessity*—If there be finite space, there must be infinite space.

*Single assumption of fact*—There is finite space.

*Conclusion*—Consequently, there is infinite space.

*Converse conclusion by negation*—If there be not infinite space, there cannot be finite space, and, consequently, there can be *no space*.

We now connect our previous argument with the conception of *space*.

*Necessary division*—All existence must be either finite or infinite in space.

*Philosophical necessity*—All finite existence must be either a portion of, or be dependent on, and derived from, infinite existence.

*Logical necessity*—If there be any finite existence in space, there must be infinite existence in space.

*Single assumption of fact*—There is finite existence in space.

*Conclusion*—Consequently, there is infinite existence in space.

*Converse conclusion by negation*—If there be not infinite existence in space, there cannot be finite existence in space, and, consequently, there can be no existence in space.

*General conclusion from the whole of the previous argument*—If there be existence, and if there be space, then there must be an existence, infinite, unlimited, and omnipresent.

## 2.—OF TIME.

Let us now pursue a similar argument with regard to *time*.

Time is distinguished from *nothing*, inasmuch as it is the condition of *change*. Also, its relative portions can be measured and compared, &c. This is not true of *nothing*.

*Necessary division*—Time must be either finite or infinite. Infinite time is called *eternity*.

*Philosophical necessity*—All finite time must be a portion of eternity.

*Logical necessity*—If there be finite time, there must be eternity.

*Single assumption of fact*—There is finite time.

*Conclusion*—Consequently, there is infinite time, or eternity.

*Converse conclusion by negation*—If there be not eternity, there cannot be time.

And as we might conclude that if there were not space there could not be *matter*, so we may conclude that if there were not time there could not be *change*. And thus the argument, if valid, would prove, that if there were not an existence, infinite in space and immortal in time, there could not be either a phenomenal appearance, which we call *matter*, or a phenomenal change, which we call an *event*.

We connect our previous conclusions with *time*, in the same manner as we connected them with *space*. Thus,—

*Necessary division*—All existence must be either finite or infinite in time.

*Philosophical necessity*—All existence finite in time, must be either a portion of, or be dependent on, and derived from an immortal existence.

*Logical necessity*—If there be existence finite in time, there must be existence infinite in time.

*Single assumption of fact*—There is existence finite in time. (Supposed to be *indubitable*, from our own consciousness.)

*Conclusion*—Consequently, there must be existence infinite in time.

*Converse by negation*—If there be not an immortal existence, there cannot be a finite existence.

SECT. II.—This is, in reality, the genuine termination of what may be termed an *a priori* argument. If we pursue the argument further, and link other ideas with it, it becomes *concrete*, and embodies conceptions plainly and evidently *a posteriori*. We must pursue it further however, for it leaves us in the midst of abstractions far too widely removed from our practical requirements to be considered as sufficient. We must go on,—not with an *a priori* argument, but with this *a priori preparation*, and fill up our scheme with realities obtained through observation. No doubt the argument is, to a certain extent, valid, but it is far too shadowy to constitute a theology. That *something* is, at all times and in all places, is a most important conclusion, but totally insufficient for the reason to rest on,—except as it might rest on a general mathematical truth. The *a priori* argument, at best, is only the mathematic of the argument. It begins with abstractions and ends with abstractions. And the value of an *a priori* argument must be estimated on precisely the same terms as the value of mathematical science; which, considered by itself, is only an ingenious exercise of the reason, but which, when realised in astronomy, physics, geography, navigation, &c., springs at once into the position of the great practical necessary of the realm of scientific knowledge. The same is true of the *a priori* argument. In itself it is a subtle exercise of the reason; but when brought to bear on

the region of reality, it co-ordinates the whole realm of nature, and becomes, to all human knowledge, what mathematical truth is to the realm of science.

Without mathematic (which, indeed, is only the *preparation* for physical science, properly so called,) there could be *no* science—no science of the solar system,—no science of the earth,—no geography,—no weighing, measuring, calculating, computing, comparing,—in fact, no reasoning with definite terms. And so, without an *a priori* scheme of some kind, there could be no major theory of the universe,—nothing in which to locate our partial consciousness,—nothing more than phantasm and phenomenal appearance,—there could be no *truth*, but only a *seeming*, which seeming would be only a perpetual flow of unintelligible change. All would be chaos,—hopeless and irrevocable confusion and disorder,—without beginning, without end, without aim and purpose. The reason would sink before the hopeless spectacle,—truth would be undistinguishable from error,—and humanity, appalled by the perpetual mystery, would plunge into maniac fury, or wither into the imbecility of idiocy. The savage, in fact, in whom the reason is almost powerless, is an insane man, oscillating between idiot simplicity and maniac fury.

Some persons may smile, when we state that the savage is a savage because he has not an *a priori* argument. True, the relation seems remote from Samuel Clarke to the Kaffir or the Bushman. And so it is, if we were to understand by an *a priori* argument its *literary statement*. It is not the *statement* of

the argument, but its *presence*, which distinguishes the rational man from the barbarian. The argument might never have been stated in words, yet, more or less, all civilised nations carry it in their reason, and apply it unconsciously in thousands of different circumstances. For what, after all, is the argument? It is only the human reason making a schematic statement of its own method of procedure in the major problem of the cognisable universe. And as men could reason before Aristotle displayed the method which the reason employed, so do men entertain a practical conception of the *a priori* argument, even where they have no knowledge of its *statement*. And all nations are savage where there is not this practical conception, simply because the same reason that enables men to construct (even unconsciously) a general argument of the universe, is the very power that guides them in all the great interests of their life,—the very same that enables them to trace causes and effects,—the same that leads them to abstract the essentials of a phenomenon from its accidents,—the same that enables them to achieve science, to elaborate a constructive system of society, to invent machinery, whether in the mechanical or social world, and in a thousand different ways to apply their *reason* to the very circumstances in which they are placed.

Let us, then, return upon this argument, and examine it critically.

We shall not begin by any of that casuistical criticism which endeavours to confound the argument, either by dealing with *words*, or by advancing the

summary proposition that an *a priori* argument cannot prove a *fact*. Words, at least, are only symbols made use of to suggest a certain course of *thought*; and the question is not whether the words are or are not susceptible of various meanings, but whether the course of thought intended by the writer and suggested to the candid reader, is logically consistent and valid. It would avail us nothing to make special verbal criticisms which any schoolboy of ordinary acuteness would have little difficulty in making. Such a mode of treating the *a priori* argument is mean, degrading, and unworthy; and, probably, the last man to understand the full import and genuine value of the *a priori* scheme, is the verbal casuist who fixes his attention on its terms.

The summary rejection, namely, by the assertion, that an *a priori* argument cannot prove a *fact*, is also a mean and poor criticism. It may be true, but not relevant. Of course, that which begins with a mere abstraction, must end with an abstraction; but what then? The *a priori* argument, properly understood, never pretends to prove a *fact*, but a *necessity*. For if, indeed, it could prove a fact, it would instantly change its character and drop its universality. *Facts* we can conceive to be other than they are; and, consequently, if the *a priori* argument ended by proving a fact, it would end by proving something which we could conceive to be other than it is; and, consequently, it would abdicate its high claims to impose on the human reason the necessity of a mode of belief which the reason cannot escape from, if it have only the logical power of comprehension. Such objections

prove, not the weakness of the argument, but the poverty of the objector,—exactly as if we were to object to algebra or geometry that it does not prove a fact, and, therefore, to conclude that either science was practically fruitless. Neither proves a fact; neither proves either the existence of concrete space or of concrete quantity; but both prove necessary modes of thinking with regard to hypothetical space and quantity, and *when* concrete space or quantity is discovered or admitted, the abstract science gives us the law under which we must think, to think correctly.

And so it is with an *a priori* argument in the universal field of reason. The question is not, whether we can or cannot prove a fact, but whether we are under certain imperative laws of belief, which schematise our knowledge the very moment we acquire knowledge. If man were *merely* rational, his whole existence would consist of rational *schemes*,—of skeleton *maps* of knowledge,—of empty, vague, and hypothetical systems of intellectual *forms*,—of things which *must* be, if we only could establish that something *is*. Man *merely* rational, would be like the sheet of prepared paper not yet immersed in the solution of fact; the form of knowledge would be there, but no manifestation of it would be possible. Before he can know, he must come in contact with the real universe, and then his impressions assume forms which his reason had previously dictated, and which are *necessary*, because they belong to the very construction of his mind.



In thus regarding the *a priori* argument, we abandon altogether the supposition, that it can establish a moral theology, or even the existence of a personal Deity. To stretch the argument to such an extent, is only to destroy its value, and weaken its power of conviction. It is not a *theology*, but a universal schematic of the reason; and if it be regarded as an enunciation of the laws of thought, and as a statement of the ultimates of human belief, we remove from it the objections which may be brought against it as a demonstrative theology.

In reality, what does it exhibit? It is plainly evident, that if we start with abstract terms, we never can arrive (except by an illicit process) at a conscious *Mind*. Our conclusion cannot logically contain *more* than was contained in the premises; and if the premises are mere abstractions, the conclusion, at the utmost, can only exhibit some abstract necessity, under which we must think reality when reality has been acquired. And this, in fact, is the very conclusion of each portion of the argument, if we omit the assumption of fact which was requisite in every syllogism to give even the possibility of a real conclusion. Let us omit the assumption, and in each case we shall find only a hypothesis with an attendant necessity, *e.g.*, "If there be contingent existence, there must be necessary existence," &c., which is a mere law of our thought. But this proposition does not state that there *is* existence, but only that if there be existence of *one* kind, there must be existence of another kind. It is *schematic*, exactly like

mathematic, which enables us to say, that if one side of a triangle be of any given or conceivable length, the other two sides must be greater—which does not by any means prove *a fact*, as there may be no such triangle, but a rational necessity; that is, a mode of thought or knowledge which is absolutely *imperative*.

Let us consider, then, the single assumption which an *a priori* argument requires to connect it into a scheme of real knowledge. It is this:—“*There is existence.*” This is the single *fact* required by an *a priori* argument; all the rest is logical division, axiomatic necessity, or logical process. Now, this fact (*There is existence*), although only an assumption in the abstract argument, opens up an entirely new field of investigation, and prepares the way for the union of the *a priori* scheme, with the whole of the real and phenomenal universe subjected to our appreciation. “*Existence*” is the universal representative of all that we can afterwards ascertain to *be*, and all that we ascertain to be is thus brought parenthetically into the scheme of argumentation; so that, as soon as we ascertain *what* is, and what is *the character* of any real existence, we proceed to determine the character of the abstract existences which appeared as terms in our universal formula. And thus, instead of abandoning our *a priori* argument, we only transform it from its *abstract* form into a concrete or real form,—the scheme remaining the same, but the terms becoming more and more real, until at last they ought to reach individual reality. The argu-

ment thus bears to the real universe the same relation that an algebraic formula bears to the material objects which can be placed in equation, and reasoned with as soon as their qualities are ascertained,—the process of operation being exclusively rational, and the terms exclusively real. Hence we conclude, that though the *a priori* argument fails in leading us to a fact, yet when we fill into its abstract formula the real existences with which we can become acquainted, it will lead us to a valid conclusion with regard to real existences, which conclusion could never have been arrived at without its aid. It is the algebraic formula of the universe.

SECT. III.—SPECIAL CONSIDERATION REGARDING THE A PRIORI ARGUMENT.

Before leaving this argument, it is necessary to point out a consideration of no small importance. This argument starts from the idea of Being, and by terming self-existent Being, *substance*, a pantheistic argument has been constructed.

Now, it must be distinctly noted and carefully remembered, that man dwells in two universes, if such an expression may pass. There is, first, the objective, sensational universe, where all that is must be *extended*. In this universe, or region of thought, the laws of space and time, and the laws of velocity which unite space and time, are universally prevalent. Every thing in this region is considered as under the conditions of static extension and dynamic causation.

There can be no matter without extension, and no motion without force. Substance in this region is necessarily extended, even though it be a *power*. To every power, in fact, we assign locality, and take into consideration those relations of distance and direction, which enable the power to act in a particular manner. In this region every thing is subjected to the law of measurement.

But there is also another universe, where the laws of space, time, and velocity, do not necessarily enter. The former may be termed the natural universe, the latter the spiritual or mental universe. Here the relations are of an entirely different character. We do not figure to ourselves *mind*, as necessarily occupying any definite and specified space; on the contrary, we say that mind is the substance which underlies the phenomenon of *thought*, and to thought we attach no idea of extension. It is not commensurable with *space*, nor is it subject to the laws of velocity. We speak of it in language, borrowed, it is true, from the objective world, but expressing a different meaning from our conception of physical phenomena. We say, analogically and metaphorically, that thoughts are great or little, high or low; but we never mean that any measure of space can be applied to the thoughts, although we use the language of physical mensuration. We say that thought is quick, but not quick in the sense of motion, which must be through all the intermediate portions of space. We say that thoughts follow each other, but not in the chronological sense of natural time;—for I

may think of to-morrow, and afterwards think of a thousand years before the flood. I may, in thought, be present in the future and in the past; I may rove from the creation to the final winding-up of terrestrial affairs; nay, I may imagine new worlds, and be present, in thought, in regions which have no real existence. Time, it is true, in the mere sense of *sequence*, must pervade my thinking; but time is a totally imperfect measure of the cognitive phenomenon. Fast as time may fly, it cannot keep pace with the imagination, which outstrips all conceivable velocities. Even light, with all its speed, is but a sluggard when compared to thought: or ever the light has begun its course, thought may be away in regions which the light could not reach in ages. Thought can wait upon the lightning, and wonder at its tardiness; for ere the swiftest gleam can encircle the minutest particle of air, thought can span the firmament, and rush round the boundaries of the stars.

If, then, thought be so essentially distinguished from every physical phenomenon, in that it is, as it were, relieved from the laws of space, it is surely an enormous fallacy to base a pantheistic doctrine on the idea of *substance*, when that substance is merely the substance of the objective world. The objective world never reaches the spiritual world; and *whatever* be true of the objective world, there still remains the world of mind and spirit, which is, indeed, the most present to our consciousness, and the true world in which the mind of man dwells. In this world, space sinks out of all account,—it is nothing, has

no value, no import,—it may be altogether neglected. Ruling, as it does, the objective world, and being the first absolute necessity, without which there can be no physical universe, it sinks away into a mere remembrance when we approach the world of mind. The *substance of thought* (that is, that substance which we necessarily conceive to underlie the phenomenon of thinking,) is in no respect to be compared to the substance of the objective world, except in this, that the two substances have *analogous relations*. The substance of thought is *a person*; and a *person*, in the mental or spiritual acceptation, has no extension that we can conceive, and, in fact, no direct relation to space. *Personality* is the radical element of all mental existence; and so distinguished is personality from matter, and from every thing connected with the material universe, that we can conceive thousands of millions of persons to occupy the same space in the physical universe,—that is, however small the space, we can conceive that any number of individual *consciousnesses* should be there present.

It is from overlooking this most essential fact, that many subtle men, by pursuing a course of logic in the region of the objective world, arrive at a pantheistic conclusion. Indeed, I rather apprehend, that the pantheistic scheme, if confined exclusively to the objective world, is by no means so erroneous as we are in the habit of supposing, and that its logic is at all events of very difficult refutation, even if it can be fairly refuted at all. For if we reject the

idea of *personality* from the premises of our argument, I confess, for my own part, that I do not see how we can escape from Pantheism. Where our reason assures us that there must be a universal substance, and where all phenomena with which we are cognisant take place under fatalistic laws, I do not see how we can avoid a doctrine which is, to all intents and purposes, *pantheistic*. But when we start, as, indeed, we ought to do, from our own *personality*, we arrive at a totally different conclusion, and establish the necessity of a *moral* universe. And it is, indeed, this *moral* universe—and not, by any means, the physical universe—which runs through the whole tenor of the Scriptures. For it is not meant that God should be near us *in space*, or that man should draw near to God *in space*; but that man can only be right in as much as God is present *in the soul*, and that man's moral soul or spirit should draw near to God in its affections and obedience. Nay, if we do not *commence* with *personality*, the whole Scripture is an ænigma, and the whole scheme of Christian revelation absolutely unintelligible. And this view will, to some extent, afford a philosophical explanation of those many passages of the sacred Scriptures, where the wisdom of this world is placed *in contrast* with THE TRUTH, which would be a paradox if the Scriptures were not constantly assuming (and never allowing the fact to escape from the most prominent notice), that God is *a person*, and that man is a personal spirit, altogether distinguished from the material creation.

Now, on this fact of *personality* may be founded a far better *a priori* argument than that which begins with *being*; and, indeed, *personality* is a far nearer and more imminent conception *to us* than *being*. Such an argument would escape from the pantheistic idea, which has always more or less accompanied the *a priori* argument, when that argument began with the conception of *space* and *substance*.

Such an argument would present itself in this form:

Let the idea of *personality* be *given*. [We may fairly assume, I think, that our own *personality* is the nearest and most indubitable fact with which we are acquainted; it is our primary consciousness, our starting-point,—so primary, in fact, that the recent German philosophy assumes the *All* to be only a modification of the *ME*.]

Then, *personality* involves the idea of conscious freedom within a greater or less extent. Suppose this to be given in the idea of *personality*: Then,

*Necessary division*—All persons must be either self-existent or not self-existent.

*Philosophical necessity*—All persons not self-existent, must derive their existence from a self-existent person.

*Logical necessity*—If there be a person not self-existent, there must be a person self-existent.

*Single assumption of fact*—*I* am a person not self-existent.

*Conclusion*—Consequently, there is a self-existent person.

*Converse conclusion by negation*—If there be not



a self-existent person, then am I not. But this being *impossible* to the consciousness, the argument, if valid, entails the absolute necessity of my admitting the existence of a self-existent person.

Now, *this* argument, which is at least as valid as *any a priori* argument, and perhaps more to the purpose than most, entirely obviates the pantheistic tendency, because we assume that a *person* is not under absolutely fatalistic laws, but has a certain modicum of liberty. This liberty—how great or how small we must determine psychologically by our consciousness—is supposed to be known to us by its exercise, by the conscious exertion of our energy, by the spontaneity which we actually experience, and which, in fact, constitutes one of the most striking portions of our personal consciousness. And hence, if an *a priori* argument be valid at all, we pass *immediately* from the very fact of our conscious existence, to the admission of a self-existent PERSON,—not through the labyrinth of inferences and inductions from the phenomena of the material world, but immediately by a very intuition of our reason. We have not thus *to seek* God; but God, in the true sense of a self-existent PERSON, is as present to our reason whenever we reflect, as our own personality is to our consciousness. We are at once, and without any circumlocution of argument, God's *creatures*, and our *moral* consciousness instantly confirms the doctrine of the reason by its dictates of responsibility. We are thus, as it were, brought into the Divine Presence without any mediation of

*space*, without even the idea of locality—but in our inward soul, standing face to face with the most tremendous of all possible truths, namely, that so sure as *we* are, so sure is there an ALMIGHTY, by whom all things consist.

This argument brings us, I believe, much nearer the true state of the case, than any of those which endeavour to prove the Divine Existence through reference to the objective world. Those arguments may be to some extent excellent in their way, confirmatory of our belief, and necessary for the refutation of objectors. But yet, we feel (and probably all men who turn their attention to the subject, feel) that those arguments do *not* contain the real *reason* of our belief. They may contain sufficient reason for *a* belief, but yet they do not contain the actual reason that *does*, in spite of every thing, make man acknowledge God. I say *in spite of every thing*; for surely, if there is any thing conceivable by man that he would naturally shrink from, and wish otherwise, it is this very fact, that there is a God to *whom* (not to *which*) he is *responsible*. This we know, from the whole history of mankind, to be the truth of truths,—the one of all others which has exercised the greatest influence on the human race. Man is *corrupt and fallen*, yet he cannot escape from God. He will invent every species of false religion, and bend his conscience to his corrupt desires, yet he cannot escape from a religion. Atheism may trumpet forth her astounding discovery, but the world will not accept Atheism, because the world *cannot*. A few may

endeavour, vainly, to convince us that there is no God, but the common reason of humanity spurns the gigantic lie, when presented in its naked deformity, and resorts to all incredible schemes whereby the truth may be defeated, even though it cannot be denied. Man would escape from a doctrine of responsibility, if man could ; but this being impossible, the next thing is to construct some religion suitable to man's fallen desires, which, while it still affords some specious hope that man shall escape divine punishment, shall yet be in accordance with man's own fallen nature. Such a religion is a human theology, and it will always take its character from the condition of the people by whom it is professed ; so that the various so-called religions that prevail throughout the earth, are, to a very great extent, theologic reflections of the various nations themselves. But although this be true with regard to the *character* of the religion, the great fact is universally present in all,—that man *must* have a God.

Now, if we consider the two regions or worlds in which man dwells—the objective and the mental,—and consider further, that when man proceeds to assign a character to God, he does so by an observation of the phenomena with which he is acquainted, we shall have little or no difficulty in explaining the diversity of religion that prevails among the various portions of the human race. Those who contemplate *nature* will arrive at a *primordial force*, unfolding or developing itself in the phenomena of the objective world. Those, again, who contemplate *man*, will ar-

rive at a mythology of hero-divinities ; and as both are likely to be more or less combined, we can easily see how such a method should lead most logically to a polytheism,—with *Fate* as the ultimate deity, and with personal deities of a minor and less universal character, superintending the respective operations of nature, or presiding over the various passions or emotions of the human mind.

And thus, a *diversity* of religion, so far from being an argument against the existence of the Divine Being, is, in reality, one of the strongest confirmations of the truth, that man is by nature a religious and believing creature—all darkened and erroneous, as he may be, from want of the truth. For this diversity only proves that man, under *all* circumstances, is obliged to have a religion. The *form* varies, but the *fact* is there ; and, if the view here advanced be correct, we can assign reasons both for the fact and the form. The Hindu, contemplating Nature, arrives at Natural Pantheism,—the Moslem, contemplating *Will*, arrives at Moral Pantheism,—the Greek and Roman, contemplating *Man*, arrive at a whole mythology of deities, representing partly the course of nature, and partly the human sentiments,—the degraded Savage, contemplating his own passions and bloody career, arrives at deities of ferocious mien and aspect, which are, in fact, only the exaggerated form of himself,—the German Philosopher, contemplating the intellectual operations, arrives at the conclusion that thought is *the All*.

Were we not to admit that there is some other

argument than that derived from the objective world, we could assign no reasons for these great anthropological phenomena. The Mythology of Greece must have *an origin*, quite as much as the Pantheism of the Hindu, or the Moral Fatalism of the Turk. And this origin we can assign at once, if we admit that man reasons immediately to a theology from his own consciousness, without any induction from the objective world—and, *when* the theological idea is established, that he proceeds to assign characters to his deities from the character of his own *mental* experiences. Hence the deification of anthropological phenomena, both mental and physical,—of love, hope, cunning, health, war, peace, &c., that is, of the emotions, conditions, and occupations of *man*,—quite as much as we find elsewhere the deification of what we term *Nature*.

This fact may be considered as distinct evidence that man *does* reason to a theology (however imperfect, or absolutely erroneous,) immediately and directly from his own mental consciousness, and without the intervention of an appeal to the objective world. And if so, it must be by such an argument as is here presented, which starts from our own *personality*, and arrives at a personal deity.

Let us now consider for a moment the light in which we should regard the mythologies and polytheisms that have prevailed among mankind. These are to be viewed as gropings after God by *corrupt* man. This view is of essential importance. There has been some disputation as to whether any nation

has ever been found without a God, and perhaps too much importance has been attached to the fact, on whichever side the truth may be. Whether the African, reduced to the lowest depths of intellectual and moral darkness, still retains his fetish, or whether he has thrown his fetish away, and become absolutely without the semblance of a religion, can surely be of very little importance, either one way or the other. The civilised man, who has acquired a certain degree of knowledge, and a certain freedom of thought, would base nothing on the superstitions of an unfortunate barbarian, who does little more than follow the animal instincts of his nature. We may detect, even in him, the germs of a spiritual nature; but whether we do or do not detect this by actual observation, is a matter of very minor importance. We know that they are there; but whether we detect them or not, must depend greatly on our own means of eliciting their manifestation,—and, consequently, any argument of this kind is necessarily of little value.

To establish this point (which we esteem worthy of attention), let us view one of the universal laws of organization. We take the vegetable world in the first instance. We find plants distributed in various regions. We find them in a suitable region performing their functions,—growing, flowering, seeding, and propagating their kind, with health and vigour. In a less suitable region we find the same plant growing and flowering, but *not* seeding, and *not* capable of propagating its kind. In a still less

suitable region, or in still more adverse circumstances, we find the plant growing, but *not* flowering. And, finally, we find the plant, in extreme circumstances of unsuitability, only feebly holding on by life, stunted and scarcely even recognisable,—a poor, wretched specimen of an organization placed in circumstances which nature never intended.

This fact, which appears to be *universal* with regard to all organization, may be termed the law of deterioration. In the animal kingdom the same law will be found, to a greater or less extent, wherever man removes animals from those circumstances which accord with their organic construction. The horse worked in the dark will become blind,—the sheep, in certain localities, will grow hair instead of wool,—the dog will degenerate into a hairless cur,—and so forth.

The same law applies to man, physically, intellectually, and morally. Physically, the law may be said to apply almost as universally as it does to the animal or vegetable kingdom. Man, long exposed to extreme circumstances of want, improper shelter, and the absence of the physical requirements which are essential to the well-being of his bodily organization, will deteriorate in the very structure of his frame. The Bushman is a deteriorated man; and the Irish, in some districts, have assumed a physical form that distinctly marks the influence of habitual suffering. The stature decreases,—the body becomes developed in the more animal region of the abdomen,—the muscular system dwindles,—the

nervous system diminishes in proportion to the osseous structure,—the jaw projects,—the bones of the face assume a predominance over the relative size of the forehead,—and the man, quite distinctly and undeniably, has acquired a form that approaches nearer to that of the lower animals. This condition of deterioration involves with it an intellectual and moral deterioration, which might, however, take place separately from special causes. Long continued education has an influence on the capabilities of a race in almost every direction in which the human faculties can be employed. Were we to take, for instance, twenty Kaffir children, and twenty children from one of our sea-port towns, and endeavour to make them sailors, we should find the Kaffirs extremely inefficient. Were we, on the contrary, to endeavour to make them herders of cattle, we should find a species of instinctive adaption for this mode of life, marking, to some extent, the transmission of certain tastes and habits. Now, *civilised* man is man under a long course of intellectual instruction, running through a hundred different channels—and savage man is man under a long course of moral and intellectual neglect.

That man can deteriorate, physically, intellectually, and morally, is one of the great facts of man's natural history; and that there are deteriorated men on the surface of the globe, is also a fact,—indeed, all men may be termed more or less deteriorated men. This fact belongs to our argument in the following manner:—If, in studying the true characters of a vegetable, we ought not to look to a deteriorated plant;



and if, in studying the characters of an animal, we ought not to look to a deteriorated individual or race; so, in studying man, and in asking especially what are his higher characteristics, we ought not to look to deteriorated tribes, for there we shall certainly find certain qualities, if not in abeyance, at least in a very low state of development. If the plant cease to bear seed in extreme circumstances, we are not thence to infer, that it is not the nature of the plant to bear seed; and so, even if we were to find a nation or tribe so degraded that we could not detect their acknowledgment of a God, we must not thence infer that man was not made to worship God. Universality in this case is an erroneous test of truth, and the argument of universality is fallacious; that is, if it were found that man did *not* universally possess some religion, this in reality would be no objection to religious truth: it would only be a proof that man could be deteriorated to a lower point than we had previously supposed.

We conclude, then, that it would neither destroy nor even weaken the theological argument, if a tribe of men were found among whom we could not recognise the traces of a theology. Because, to discover the true characteristics of man, and especially his higher characteristics, we must not study man degraded and deteriorated, but must study man in his most favourable development,—where he is performing the largest number of functions, cultivating the highest faculties, acting upon the highest motives, and achieving the highest ideal of life. That is, we must study *Christian* man.

And again, this view—that man passes at once from his own consciousness to the idea of a personal God, without the intermediate induction of nature—does to a very remarkable extent explain to us the diversity of religions, and the degraded forms of religion which prevail upon the surface of the globe. That which is true of the idol is true of the false conception,—“He marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man.” On the one hand, mankind will sink God into *nature*; on the other, into *humanity*. Pantheism and Anthropotheism, or a combination of these, will explain almost every false religion that has been professed by the human race; and as both systems are capable of producing error, so both systems are capable of producing truth,—that is, not truth in its full development, but *some* truth. Both systems are capable of throwing light on the theologic argument. Both are errors, yet errors of such a nature, that they indicate truths of the highest import, and furnish us with a certain amount of material, which, when purged from impurity, may be wrought into a fabric of sound and stable argument. The pantheistic error must be transformed into an exhibition of God’s power, wisdom, and goodness, as illustrated in his natural creation, while the anthropotheistic error must be transformed into a moral theology, discoursing of man’s moral nature, and building on all that can be learnt from *it*, some reasonable conclusion as to the moral attributes of the divine Creator. We turn, then, to the *a posteriori* argument.

BOOK IV.



THE A POSTERIORI ARGUMENT.



## BOOK IV.

### THE A POSTERIORI ARGUMENT.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### DEFINITION OF ARGUMENT, AND FORMAL STATEMENT OF THE LAWS OF CAUSATION.

THE *a posteriori* argument has been advanced by some distinguished writers as *antagonistic* to the *a priori* argument. This view cannot be admitted. Both are portions of one and the same argument; and neither is sufficient by itself alone, because each region—the objective and the subjective—contains phenomena which the other region does not contain.

Hence, it is a vain question to ask, whether the *a posteriori* argument be *better* than the *a priori* argument. The term *better* cannot here refer to logical conclusiveness, if the two arguments require to be combined before the argument is really complete. It can only refer to the quality which makes either argument more impressive for certain minds, which may be cast in a mould to receive the one and neglect the other, or to overlook the merits which belong to a special train of reasoning which has no

attractions for the particular form of their understanding. Thus, the metaphysician, who dwells habitually amid high abstractions, will attach most importance to the *a priori* scheme, which involves the idea of *necessary* existence and of *infinity*, when time and space are taken into consideration. Nothing less than infinity will satisfy the requirements of his intellect, and he perceives (or imagines that he perceives) that an induction from the objective universe can never reach infinity. On the contrary, the man of less subtle habit—who dwells rather in the region of the understanding, or whose powerful imagination requires some apprehension of reality, that it may compass the wisdom, beauty, harmony, and order of nature—will naturally endeavour to apprehend, not so much the fact of God's existence and infinity, (truths which he does not deny, although he reflects not how they came to his mind,) as the *character* of the Divine Being displaying itself in the wonderful works of creation. He *knows* that God is, but he wishes, by tracing God's hand, to make himself acquainted with the manner in which God orders the economy of the universe, and thence to infer the attributes of God from a special study of his works. He finds that thus, and thus only, does the presence of God assume a full and vital reality. God not only *is*, but is *everywhere*, ordering all events in the natural universe, reigning as the universal Sovereign, creating all things by his power, and ruling all things by his wisdom. In every phenomenon of nature, therefore, he perceives the attributes of God; and

from the character of the phenomena, he infers to some extent the character of the attributes, and hence the character of the Divine Being. And as in every portion of his knowledge of nature, he finds two elements, namely, the objective element, or fact, and the subjective element, or reasoning, he concludes that the very same God who made *nature*, made also his *reason*, and, consequently, that the God of nature is *one* with the God of his intuition; and thus he unites the two regions into one, regarding them both as the productions of the same Divine hand, and as the correlatives of each other.

Let us, then, endeavour to define the *a posteriori* argument, to divide it into its species, to estimate its value, to show in what it is insufficient if taken *alone*, and to show how it may be combined with what we have termed the *a priori* formula, in which formula there was an assumption of fact, or *blank* proposition. This blank proposition is now to be filled with realities derived from *a posteriori* observation.

The *a posteriori* argument is an endeavour to infer the MAJOR CAUSE of the universe from the *minor effects* of the universe.

It therefore proceeds on the universal principle of causation, which expresses itself in the axiom, "Every change must have a cause;" and to this axiom is annexed the coincident proposition, "Every cause must be of such a nature as to account for the character of the change."

Hence, "From the character of the change we may infer the character of the cause."

*Change* is a matter of *observation* ; but when change is viewed under the general intuition of causation, it is termed *effect*. The *unchangeable* requires no cause ; all changes are *effects* of some prior *cause*.

Hence, again, "From the character of the effect we may infer the character of the cause, *so far forth as the effect extends*." The latter clause is important. A cause must always be as great as the effect, but it may be indefinitely greater, and, consequently, we can reason from the effect only so far forth as the effect extends. First,—

#### OF CHANGES.

§ 1. *Analytic*.—Change must be either *absolute* or *relative*. I call *absolute* the coming into existence, or the going out of existence. These are termed *creation* and *annihilation*. Creation and annihilation are absolute changes.

I call *relative* all changes in time, space, quantity, and quality, or in any of those abstract *categories* into which the human reason locates existences and events. These categories, although they may, for the most part, be ranged under the heads of quantity and quality, are conveniently distinguished by specific names as, for instance, *order, motion, velocity, direction, colour, temperature, tone, weight, affinity, vitality, sensation, emotion, &c., &c.* These categories indicate conveniently certain regions of change which we *abstract* out of the perpetual flowing of the universe, and consider separately for specific investigation.

Of creation it is not necessary to say much,



because the argument lies in a very small compass, and is not capable of extended illustration. It is an undoubted certainty that creation has taken place; and those who have appeared to deny the fact, have, in reality, only endeavoured to dispute the *character* of the Creator. Even those who assure us that animals are produced, at first, according to some natural law, and under the agency of some inherent power of matter, do, by no means, obviate the necessity of a Creator. They assume that this *power* is the creating agent, and, consequently, the question with them is not whether there is or is not a Creator, but whether the creative power be of one kind or another.

With regard to matter itself, I confess that it is extremely difficult to affirm, as a proposition conclusively established, that matter *must* have been created; that there was a time when there was no matter, and again a time when matter had come into being out of nothing, save a creative will. We are assured (from revelation) that all things depend on God, and that all existence originates with him. But that is not the question. The question is this: Let a portion of matter be *given*, have we, from any examination of the matter itself, any conclusive evidence that it *must* have been created?—that is, are we actually compelled to think that there *must* have been a time when this portion of matter did not exist? I confess, I say, that I do not see any *a posteriori* argument which would compel me so to think; and though I cannot think matter eternal, neither

do I think it non-eternal; that is, I leave the question unsolved, because I have no sufficient data to guide my understanding. Matter *is*, but how it came into existence I cannot ascertain from any examination of its material. From the question of absolute creation, therefore, I retire, until I shall have acquired some experience of the phenomenal or relative changes.

When we turn to relative change, we are in the region of *the conditioned*. In space we are in a determinate point; but above us, beneath us, on the right hand and the left, is the limitless. We are at a centre, but without the possibility, even, of imagining a circumference. In time we are at a *present*, and have some knowledge of a past; but, before the knowable past lies the limitless eternity, and after us, in the future, lies the ever and ever to which no boundary can be assigned. All that we can know in the region of experience is conditioned, relative, comparable, and finite. It neither reaches infinity in the category of quantity, nor absolute cause, or substance, in the region of quality. It may be supersensible, as we have proven with regard to *force*, but still not ultimate. The whole universe of experience is, in fact, only the minor term of a universal syllogism, of which the major is the unconditioned deliverance of the abstract reason.

In time and in space, therefore, all that we can know through experience is *finite*. In quantity, all that we can know through experience is *relative*,—*nothing* and *infinity* are equally unconstruable to

human thought, as *positive* apprehensions. However great our experience may be, it must stop short of the absolute infinite; and, on the other hand, *nothing* is a mere negation of thought, of which we can have *no* experience. Consequently, all that we can know in quantity lies *between* nothing and infinity, which is the region of *the conditioned*, the comparative, the relative. Hence all possible affirmations in quantity, all possible measurements, must assume an arbitrary standard; which is, indeed, the fact in every science that involves both quantity and experience. *One*, in arithmetic, is absolute, because pure arithmetic is abstract; but *one*, applied to any science of experience, is arbitrary,—as a foot, yard, mile, in linear measurement,—a yard, pole, acre, &c.,—an ounce, pound, ton, &c.,—a pint, gallon, hogshead; that is, wherever we introduce an actual experience into the abstract formulæ of quantity, we must assume a gauge or standard which is *arbitrary* and not absolute,—that is, the whole of our experimental knowledge is *conditioned* and *relative*.

*Quality* is one of the universal categories of human thought. It pervades all possible cognition. Whatever is, has its *quality*. But here also we are restricted to limits, contrasts, differences, and cannot from experience affirm that we know absolute qualities. We do not from experience know the absolute cause of the universe, nor the absolute substance of the universe; but, *under* the absolute, we know many causes and substances which are distinguished from each other, not merely in quantity or degree,

but in quality. Thus, for instance, *heat* differs from cold in degree; but it differs from *weight* in quality. Heavy and light differ in degree; but weight differs from motion in quality. Motions differ in degree when they are fast or slow; but motion differs from colour in quality. Hardness and softness differ in degree; but both differ in quality from geometric form, &c. Taking the great items of the cognisable universe, we say that space differs in quality from time, and that matter differs in quality from mind; that mental properties differ in quality from material properties; and that moral emotions differ in quality from those perceptions which are merely intellectual.

Hence, then, the great object of research in a science of nature, is the enumeration of the qualities of nature, and the determination of the quantities under which the qualities are manifested to the human cognition. According to the qualities found in nature, so do we infer corresponding, correlative, or efficient causes, which, we are constrained to presume, must exist anteriorly, or otherwise the qualities could not have existed. The moment we abandon the pantheistic doctrine, which makes all that is, God, that moment do we compel ourselves to think that there is a potency which originates each quality in particular; and hence, if we have a theory of the nature which is seen, we must, at the same time, have a theory of the nature which is not seen,—the super-nature, or invisible. And the super-nature must necessarily, in the human apprehension,

be sufficient to account for the existence and the form of that nature with which we are more directly cognisant.

In viewing, then, science analytically (science being nature in cognition), we must divide it into certain large categories, which involve distinctive qualities. And in making a division, we may use a scheme which has been adopted by some recent writers, and which is perhaps as simple and as complete as any other.

First, then, we have *the form* of knowledge, which, in one way or another, lies in the syllogism. The syllogism duly elaborated contains the whole mechanism of knowledge; and though the inductive philosophy affects to despise the syllogism, the inductive philosophy (or method of research) is only the *writing out* of one of the propositions of a very general syllogism. The whole mass of inductive science is only the minor proposition of one great syllogism, which has for its major proposition metaphysic, or the abstract form of thought.

Next to logic, comes the consideration of discrete quantity, continuous quantity, space, time, and possible motion—in which we find the whole of the mathematical sciences and dynamics.

Next comes the world of matter, inorganic and organic, mineral, vegetable, and animal.

Next comes the world of man, with all the human relations.

In each of these various regions we find peculiar qualities. Each, as we progress, opens up a certain

revelation of Nature. Each furnishes a certain quantity of material with which we must construct our major theory of the universe. Each science asks, in its own department, "*What qualities? in what quantities? in what relations?*" And each region, as we proceed from logic onwards to anthropology, gives *us new* qualities. Thus, in mathematics, we have no material properties; in inorganic nature, we have no presence of a complex series of organs all arranged together, so as to form an individual, whether plant or animal; in the vegetable kingdom we have no sensation and volition; in the merely animal world, we have no intellectual apprehension of nature for the purpose of achieving science and progressive art; and so forth. As we rise higher and higher, we find new qualities superadded to those that preceded; and, consequently, if we are to draw any inference from the qualities found in nature, we must attend most carefully to those qualities that present themselves in the last or highest region of research, for there we shall find furthest entrance into the mystery of Nature. The whole analogy of science teaches us, that we shall find there qualities which do not present themselves in any other region; and, consequently, if man be the highest object submitted to direct study, it is in man, and *man in his highest capacities, functions, and employments*, that we find Nature's last word and most important revelation. If we can obtain an answer to this question, "What is man's highest quality? what is man in his ultimate capacity? what is man, not merely in

his mechanism, but in his end and purpose?" then we have the farthest insight into the universe that Nature can give us, and the deepest knowledge that can be acquired by the exercise of our natural faculties.

Now, as the different regions present us with different *qualities*, so do they present us with different *changes*. In the inorganic world we observe one species of change; in the organic, another species; in the intellectual, another; and in the moral, another. And the examination of these changes, or specific series of changes, constitutes science in each department.

Each science, then, or each class of sciences, does virtually bring to theology a certain contribution of a certain specific character. We err, I think, and err greatly, when we endeavour to found theology on any *one* department of science,—whether astronomy or physiology, for instance,—because one science can only teach that which is proper to itself, and being limited, either in quantity or quality, it fails to exhibit the phases presented by some other science. It is not by the study of *one* department of nature that we shall ever arrive at a satisfactory theology, but by the study of all departments, and by the combination of all the results into one member of an equation,—which equation must necessarily have another member, as we shall show when we proceed to the synthetic of change.

§ 2. *Synthetic*.—In analysis we can do no more than divide a class into its genera, a genus into its

species, a species into its individuals, and an individual into its component parts.

In synthesis (that is, in the synthetic proposition, not merely in the synthesis of an analysed individual), we conjoin, by a necessary law of our intellection, two terms which have no relation of *container* and *contained*. Perhaps, indeed, it is not correct to say that *we* conjoin them. They *are* conjoined, from the mere fact of their appearance in the mind. They conjoin themselves, without aid or effort of ours; and they conjoin themselves, not merely in an abstract proposition, but in every real circumstance which the mind apprehends. The abstract proposition is nothing more than the expression of a universal form of thought, which pursues the mind wherever the mind operates. We may *state* this proposition, or we may refrain from stating it, but it accompanies us in all our efforts of intelligence. It rules us, in fact, and we can in nowise escape from it. We may mistake the best mode of expressing it; nay, we may even deny its validity, when it is stated as a barren proposition; but no sooner does the mind begin to operate on some material, than the vital proposition will appear in all its plenitude, because it is only a form of intellection.

1. The first synthesis which we make regarding change is,—

“Every change must have a cause.”

Where we have *two* terms (change and cause), and the imperative copula between them. It is evident that, analytically, change does not *contain* cause, nor



cause change, because the change is something *different* from the cause. The change is the result of the operation of the cause,—the cause being a subject, and the change a result. Where we have a transitive change, we have *three* distinct items essentially distinguished from each other; we have,—

- (1.) The cause, or agent operating;
- (2.) The object operated upon;
- (3.) The result, or change.

I have proven, while treating of Scepticism, that a cause is absolutely requisite in all scientific research that involves a dynamic phenomenon. I need not, therefore, enter again on the justification of the axiom.

2. The second synthesis is,—

That “Every change must have a cause of such a *quality*, as to account for the change.”

Seeing that there are in Nature various qualities that appear to have no direct connection (as, for instance, material qualities and moral qualities,—*wisdom* has no imaginable relation to *hardness* or *sound*), we must carefully guard against the assumption of a cause which is only sufficient to account for *one* department of Nature. This limited and exclusive method of studying Nature is fatal to all genuine philosophy,—it lands us infallibly in partial and inadequate views of Nature, corrupting science into a vain and impertinent scepticism, and presumptuously supposes that the mean and beggarly elements of a little knowledge can be set against the majesty of truth.

If we find in Nature a *moral* world as well as a material world, we must consider the cause of the material world, not as *sufficient*, but only as the *preliminary*,—as the stepping-stone,—as affording an insight into attributes that otherwise might have escaped us, but by no means as complying with the conditions of the problem. Not that the cause of the material world is *in itself* different from the cause of the moral world, but *in our apprehension*. The one is *to us* a cause in which we recognise power and skill,—but the other is a cause which involves the far more imminent qualities of personality and righteousness; and hence, if we were to base our reasonings on the former alone, we should reason,—not *erroneously*, but as *imperfectly*, as *inadequately*, as if we were to reason of the laws of Nature from the inorganic world, and *to omit all consideration of the vegetable and animal world*.

Hence, in all our reasonings, we must take into consideration *all* the qualities that lie within our experience, for if we do not, we shall fail to apprehend some of the attributes of the cause of Nature.

3. The third synthesis is,—

That “Every change must have a cause of sufficient *quantity* to account for the change.”

This principle is as important as the other, because in two directions we find *the limitless*. First, in the objective of space and time; and, second, in the subjective of moral obligation. To neither can we assign limits: we have two infinities; and whatever the *cause* be, that cause must necessarily, in our

apprehension, follow the law of quantitative correlation. If, for instance, we admit the existence of a moral Lawgiver, we cannot admit that Lawgiver to be in any wise inferior to the categorical imperative of our moral nature; and if that imperative be *absolute*,—that is, infinitely perfect in its quality of requirement,—we are at once constrained to transfer to the Lawgiver the ascertained character of the law. If the law be in any direction infinite, so must the Lawgiver be infinite in the correlative direction; not infinite in *space*, for we speak not here of space, but infinite in moral supremacy,—that is, requiring *perfect and limitless obedience*.

These three laws are the *a priori* preparations of the human reason for the elaboration of *a posteriori* truth. These laws render truth possible; without them, truth would be as impossible to man as it is to the lower animals, which see the world with their eyes, but see it not with *reason*.

If the moral law of obligation, which the mind finds within itself, be termed the categorical imperative, the law of causation, which the reason finds within itself, may be termed the categorical indicative,—as pointing out that which the reason necessarily admits in its contemplation of phenomena. The one fixes on the mind what it ought to do, the other fixes on the mind what it must believe.

Considering, then, these laws as absolutely indisputable,—and they must be so considered so long as dynamic and astronomic science remain,—we proceed to investigate the *a posteriori* argument.

## BOOK IV.

### THE A POSTERIORI ARGUMENT.

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#### CHAPTER II.

##### THE ARGUMENT STATED.

§ 1. *That the Cause of nature and the Cause of mind is one and the same.*

I have defined the *a posteriori* argument as an endeavour to infer the Major Cause of the universe from the minor effects of the universe.

This very definition proves to us at once, that an argument by induction cannot possibly be altogether *a posteriori* : it *must* involve a certain portion of the *a priori* element. This proposition I consider of the most radical importance, inasmuch as the coincident presence of the two elements proves a common origin for both the reason, or the subjective universe, and the external world, or objective universe.

The question may be proposed in the following terms :—

External to ourselves, we behold the universe of matter existing in space. Internally, we are conscious of thought and emotion—of our *own* existence. What is the connecting link that proves a common

design between the external world and the internal world?

This is found in the elaboration of systematic thought, which involves *both* elements.

Let us endeavour to prove this point as the first division of the argument. Its importance will be seen hereafter, when we come to depart farther and farther from matter on the one hand, or from self on the other. If we establish a definite connection between matter and the ME, and if we prove that matter and the ME are created, or do exist *under a homogeneity of construction*, then we have clear ground for assigning *the same* cause to those portions of mental consciousness that have no relation to matter, and to those portions of the external universe that have no relation to the peculiar attribute of mind—namely, *moral* consciousness. If we find the connecting link, we may pursue the chain on either side, and project our argument either into the region of space, or into the depths of our moral consciousness,—satisfied that we have hold of the same universe in both cases, even though we may be in regions where we have lost sight of one portion of the knowable world.

First, then, we may establish the connection between mind and matter through the ordinary argument, which bases on the existence of our organised frame, and the obedience of the muscular action to the dictates of the volition. Our body is the seat of sensation, and it is *also*, like any other portion of matter, subject to observation. It is in

one sense subjective and objective; and the obedience of the muscular motion to the will, has been advanced as establishing the connection between the objective and the subjective world.

This argument I leave for as much as it may be worth. It seems to me a mere rude appeal to a fact, which was known thousands of years since, as well as it is known to-day. The fact is a *primary*, and, I confess, I see little instruction in any appeal to a mere primary fact.

It is quite otherwise with the second argument, which grows with the growth of knowledge, expands with each new triumph of the human intellect, enlarges with the domain of reason, and runs on, ever tending more and more to subdue apparent diversity into the harmonious beauty of an intelligent creation.

It is *Science*.

Having already proven that man can and does arrive at the knowledge of supersensible noumena, I have now only concisely to criticise the form of science, and to exhibit what portion is derived from reason, and what portion from observation.

We may take astronomy as an illustration,—and the method of astronomy represents essentially the method of every other physical science.

Man has, and always has had, the phenomena of the planetary bodies before his eyes; he, therefore, stands primarily in this position:—

SENSE,	}	contemplating	}	The planetary phenomena.
REASON,				

This is the attitude of man at his outset in the pursuit of astronomic knowledge.

But man has not always had astronomic science. Science is an elaboration, an achievement, an acquisition. It is something made and done, something new introduced into the world, something that progresses, that waxes more and more accurate, more and more complete. It is neither sense and reason on the one hand, nor objective phenomenon on the other. It is something that lies between the two terms, and that unites them into a scheme of systematic knowledge, which, once achieved, is the same for all men alike. It contains, I say, portions of *both* elements. It never is achieved until it has succeeded in uniting the intuitions of reason with the apparent phenomena of nature. When achieved, it enters as a new term between the two primary terms; and the new position is this:—

SENSE.	}	Science.	{	Objective
REASON.				Phenomena.

Science is thus the union between the subject and the object; and never till that union is effected is science placed on an indisputable basis.

We have then in the phenomenon,—

APPARENT SIZE	}	of the planetary bodies.
APPARENT POSITIONS		
APPARENT MOTIONS		

And in the science we have—

REAL SIZE, (by calculation.)

REAL POSITIONS, { by rational }  
 REAL MOTIONS, { explication. }

The objects in the science are the same in individuality, but essentially different in their characteristics from the apparent phenomena.

Now, even granting that all this may be termed the *a posteriori* element, (which is making too large an admission, inasmuch as the real size, real positions, and real motions, cannot be determined without the element of mathematic, which element is *rational*, and not phenomenal,) yet there remains another item, quite as necessary for the construction of science as even the phenomenon itself,—namely, *FORCE*. Without *force* there can be no astronomic science; there may be the preliminary observation, but no science,—science being a *logical* scheme, which must have a logical construction, and must permit of reasoning according to the laws of logic.

*Force*, then, is an item introduced exclusively by the reason,—*motion* being introduced by observation; and never until such a force is discovered, as would logically account for the motions, can we say that science has attained to permanent stability.

Consequently, science contains a purely rational element, as well as a purely objective element; and, consequently, as science is the catholic truth of the human race, absolutely the same for all who can understand it, and as it contains the objective *and* the



subjective elements, and as when once achieved it is immutable and indisputable, it is the valid and undeniable proof that the objective universe of space, and the subjective universe of mind, are in reality only the separate elements of one and the same universe; and, consequently, if we find the CAUSE of the one, we find the CAUSE of the other.

Let us make this clear, as our present position is the stepping-stone to future speculation.

Science, we say, is the composite of both the objective and the subjective, both of the phenomenon and the reason. Thus:—

REASON.	SCIENCE.	PHENOMENON.
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Let us suppose that the reason were obliterated, the phenomenon would remain exactly as it was before, but *science* would disappear. Let us suppose that the phenomenon were obliterated, reason would remain, but *science* would still disappear.

Or, if we do not suppose that either were to *disappear*, let us suppose that from the science of actual astronomy we were to drop out the concrete phenomena, what would remain? The general science of dynamics and the mathematical elements. On the other hand, let us drop out the forces and the rational elements, and there would remain only the record of facts unwoven into system,—the *natural history* of the planetary bodies.

To constitute science, *both* elements are absolutely necessary; and as science is that systematic form of knowledge which must, wherever it is perfected,

produce a *unity of belief* so far forth as it extends, science affords the most indubitable evidence that the external and the internal world have the same common origin, and that the CAUSE of external nature is the same with the CAUSE of the moral world within us. True, we may depart either on the one hand into the region of objectivity, or on the other, into the depths of our moral consciousness; but having established the link of connection, we establish that if there be a cause at all, it is one and the same cause,—*and thus we project into the realm of space a moral cause, and into the realm of morals a cause of nature.*

Thus, then, we have endeavoured to prove, that whatever be the cause of the universe, it is *the same* in the two great divisions of nature and mind.

That this proposition is necessary to a complete argument, is apparent from the fact, that the pursuit of a cause of external nature has led to Pantheism and other dangerous errors, while the partial and erroneous pursuit of a moral cause, unchecked by a study of nature, and unenlightened by the sober reception of the Holy Scriptures, has given rise to many mystical sects, whose members usually end in the utmost profligacy of life and manners.

## § 2. *Of the CAUSE of External Nature.*

In this portion of the argument we are generally presented with a very large amount of illustration, and a very small proportion of argumentation. Dissertations on Natural History, from the vast region of astronomy, down to the minute description of the

human hand, or even to the microscopic examination of insect life, are advanced as treatises on Natural Theology ; and, no doubt, these works are eminently interesting and impressive to those who already are prepared to assign an orthodox Cause to all the phenomena of Nature. No doubt, we may learn much, and be much instructed, and to no small extent edified, by a search into the wisdom of God, as displayed in his works of natural creation. No doubt, these treatises tend to confirm the mind in the habitual belief of God's presence in all the operations of Nature, to expand the mind by the contemplation of the multitude of God's works, and excite wonder by the exhibition of God's extreme carefulness for all his creatures. Where the mind is prepared to see the Divine Wisdom in every evidence of design, and the Divine Power in every evidence of gigantic phenomena, and the Divine Goodness in every evidence of construction and adaptation suited to the sentient inhabitants of the globe, there the illustrations are eminently good food for man, nourishing him with knowledge, and strengthening him with stronger faith, hope, and reliance. How can He, who so careth for the least of the beings he has called into life, be negligent of man, indifferent to the wants of those who were created in the divine image, heedless of their earnest cryings and desires, regardless of their mortal fate, inexorable to their repentance? For them, Nature is no ænigma, but the handiwork of their heavenly Father; and they trace his hand with the unreserved belief, that they are contemplating

the paternal wisdom and goodness, and that they are obtaining further and further insight into the method of the divine operation.

All this, in fact, is strictly true, so far as certain individuals are concerned ; but they sometimes forget to ask the question, " What, after all, is the real value of the argument ? " What is its value, not to those who already believe in God through revelation, but what is its value to man as man, to human intellect as intellect ? What is its real import in the logical construction of a general theological argument ? What is its value, not merely for edification, but for demonstration ?

These questions are too much overlooked. I shall, therefore, endeavour to examine the logical value of an inductive argument, based on the evidences of design found in the construction of Nature.

It is plain that here we may have two starting-points : we may start from our intuitions, and instantly project an *Infinite Person* who is our author, and then we may further inquire at Nature into the attributes of this causal Being ; or, we may make the realm of Nature purely objective, and draw such inferences as we consider valid under the ordinary laws of causation. The latter is the course adopted, or supposed to be adopted, in all those arguments which (like Paley's) proceed on the discovery of the adaptation of means to an end.

Let us, then, consider how much Nature does actually teach us under the ordinary laws of causation, but excluding all reflection upon Self.

This, in fact, is the only legitimate attitude of the argument. The mind ought to be entirely subjective,—that is, in spontaneous operation,—that is, not projected on the field of observation,—that is, kept entirely out of sight. And the question is, What could we then, and in these circumstances, learn from an induction of Nature,—either astronomic, mechanic, mineralogic, chemic, or physiologic,—but, in the meantime, omitting psychologic *man*, as man has special qualities which fall to be considered hereafter?

It is admitted on all hands, that there is in nature an adaptation of means to an end. A few recent writers (Comte, &c.) have endeavoured to turn this admission aside, by the allegation, that, *of course*, all things are in conditions suitable to their nature, for otherwise they could not exist, or, at all events, could not perform their functions. That they *do* perform their functions is (say the positive materialists) only another mode of saying, that they are in circumstances suited to the performance of the functions. This crude but specious objection might have some weight, if the world contained only isolated individuals, having no relation to each other; but it can have no weight against *series*,—for, instance the composition of an animal out of extremely complex series of organs, all of which, in certain relations, are absolutely necessary. Or, again, the composition of the vegetable kingdom out of series of groups having distinct relations to each other, and holding out a good hope that the secret of classification will be so

far unravelled, that man shall have a reason for each separate genus of plants—nay, it may be, for each separate species. Or, again, if matter performed irregular or uncertain functions, there might be some reason for saying, that the fact of its function only proved that it was in circumstances to function. But this objection is utterly vain and futile against actual nature, in which we find mathematical ratios pervading so many departments, which ratios enable man to make rational calculations, even where he cannot possibly carry his direct experience. There is far more in nature than the mere performance of a function,—there is a long, careful, elaborate, and most complex preparation *for* the performance; and this fact, which is altogether indubitable, completely destroys all such summary and crude objections as those advanced by the materialistic school.

We need not endeavour to illustrate this portion of the argument by the detailed description of any one portion of material nature. Many able volumes have been written on the proofs of design, and these can easily be referred to. However interesting these works may be, they are, in fact, only repetitions of one single proposition—namely, that there is in nature the adaptation of means to an end. Whole libraries of illustration might be written, each volume exhibiting the wonders of creation in some special form or aspect; but though these works would greatly conduce to our knowledge of nature, they would not render the theological argument *more* logically valid than one single illustration well chosen

and properly exhibited. A single small portion of the human skin would exhibit design quite as really and quite as logically as the whole region of astronomy,—the human hand, quite as much as the whole animal creation,—a single leaf, quite as much as the whole vegetable kingdom. It is by no means on *the amount of illustration*, but on *the validity of the argument*, that we must fix our attention, this being far more important than the mere repetition (however brilliant) of propositions which are not called in question.

There is in nature the adaptation of means to an end, and this proposition may be proven by the examination of any portion of organised nature, and by multitudes of relations which exist among the various portions of inorganic nature. The solar system, the terrestrial seasons, the climatic distribution of plants and animals, the generation of plants, their mechanical structure, their growth, fruition, and reproduction of species, the birth of animals, the conditions of the young, the care of the parent, the climatic organization, and, often, transformation, the structural anatomy, the physiology of organs and series of organs, nutrition, respiration,—the whole natural history of the world, in fact, is teeming with perpetual illustration of the fact, that nature is constructed on a principle that shows *adaptation of means to an end*.

But the question is, after all, "*What does this adaptation of means to an end prove?*"

Does it prove, in and by itself alone, and considered *objectively*, the *existence of God*?

I am aware that this question is generally answered in the affirmative by Christian writers; but I am also aware that zeal sometimes outruns discretion, and that a wholesale inference of the Divine attributes is sometimes made with a very slender regard to logic. To infer from any department of Nature, more than that department can legitimately teach, is not to strengthen the evidences of the truth, but to weaken them, and to place the casuist, or even the more candid sceptic, in the position of justly charging the argument with unsupported assumption. It is, in fact, better to prove too little than too much, because it sometimes only requires the mind to be directed into a certain train of thinking, to work out for itself the deeper consequences which have not been announced; whereas, if we step beyond the bounds of legitimate conclusion, we peril our whole argument. If we are weak enough to state, not what we really *do* find, but what we wish to find, we are deceiving ourselves, and our opponents may be apt to believe that we are attempting to deceive them,—a result that must be fatal to all our efforts.

We shall, therefore, examine this argument quite irrespective of all previous writings on the subject; and if we conclude that it proves less than has sometimes been supposed, we hope to point out another argument that proves all we may require.

*First*, With regard to the *existence* of matter.

Does the mere existence of matter prove (by itself alone), that matter must have been created by an intelligent power?



Perhaps not. If matter were *chaotic*,—that is, if it presented no formal arrangement,—we are acquainted with no reason sufficient to make us infer that it must have been created, any more than we are compelled to believe that *space* must have been created; and *space*, as I have before shown, is distinguished from *nothing*, inasmuch as it is the condition of material existence, and can have its portions and forms geometrically measured and compared. Neither is it necessary to believe matter *eternal*, because its mere existence is insufficient to prove (to us) the existence of a *Creator*. We neither believe it eternal nor non-eternal,—that is, we regard its origin as *inexplicable*, and merely confess that we have no means by which we can solve the mystery of its existence. We consider, then, that the *mere* existence of matter does not prove any thing whatever that can be satisfactorily advanced as theological argument. If we saw matter coming into being, the case would be different; but as the sum total of matter appears to remain the same, we set down this question among the things that are insoluble to the natural reason.

*Second*, As to the *form* of matter. Here we have entirely different ground to go on. We observe the generation, accomplishment, and termination of phenomena; we measure definitely the changes, arrive at the laws of the phenomena, and finally determine the forces or proximate causes, which, acting in given conditions and circumstances, would produce the phenomena.

Matter is undoubtedly arranged, weighed, measured,

proportioned, shaped, and *constructed*, with an evident eye to the achievement of a purpose ; and both the construction and the purpose are comprehensible by the human reason. We have not here to do with chaos, but with the most surpassing variety and complexity of design,—with the most consummate beauty of arrangement,—with the most wonderful ingenuity, both in the selection of material and its peculiar adaption to given conditions. We have to do with *skill* displayed in prodigal profusion ; we have Nature instinct with order, wisdom, and the most perfect calculation,—revelling at once in the most prodigious variety of forms, in the most incomparable beauty of appearance, and in the most wonderful exhibitions of mechanical contrivance.

Whether, then, matter have or have not a *creative* cause, it is plainly evident that matter has a *formative* cause, and that there is a *Presiding Power* which superintends the material creation, and *causes* it to assume forms of a distinctive character.

This is necessary by our first synthetic law of causation : “ *Every change must have a cause.*”

§ 3. The second synthetic law which we apply to the solution of natural phenomena is, “ *Every change must have a cause of such a quality as to account for the change.*”

This is a universal law of physical science. So long as a special class of natural phenomena cannot be identified with another class, a special cause (with a special *name*) is assigned as the potential agent ; but if it so happen, that a cause already known be

found sufficient, then the special cause is merged into the more general one, and the special name sinks into the index of a specific group of phenomena, which forms part of a more extensive genus.

Two suppositions are here open to us: either that matter is endowed with the property of arranging itself in certain forms, and of performing certain dynamic functions, or that it is also acted on by some extraneous force.

In the first place, it is *true* that matter has, to a very large extent (if not to a universal extent,—a proposition which could scarcely be *proven*), a formative tendency, which seems to be inherent in the matter itself according to its kind,—hence *crystallization*. Different kinds of matter will assume different forms.

Again, in the case of gravity, where we consider matter as a mass, we may say that the force of gravity belongs to the matter, and is one of its *dynamic* qualities, as distinguished from its *static* qualities. And so also with chemical, magnetic, and electric powers. All these may be viewed as residing in the matter itself, and as forming portions of the *original* endowments of matter, which commenced we know not when. If the powers are *general*, that is, if they belong equally or proportionally to all portions of matter of a similar kind, they may be ranked as *qualities*,—and, therefore, they do not in themselves afford evidence of an extraneous power.

It is quite different, however, with special forces and special arrangements. These can in no respect

be confounded with qualities or properties of matter. A *property* must be general in its nature, however limited it may be in its application. Thus, only one diamond in the world might be blue, but this would not be in the least *extraordinary*. Blueness is a general property, that may or may not apply to matter; its accidental location is a mere matter of particular fact. What are termed accidental varieties, prove nothing more than the plastic quality of Nature under varied circumstances. If the *circumstances* were general, the results would be general also.

Special circumstances are those which cannot be confounded with general qualities, laws, conditions, or inherent properties. Thus, gravity is, in a particular sense, a quality, a law, a condition, or an inherent property,—and in either sense it is general. But the orbicular motion and rotatory motion of the planets cannot possibly be considered as a general property. It may be the property of matter to gravitate, but it cannot be the property of matter to divide itself into planets, and to revolve in special orbits at special velocities, and in special directions, unless there have been a primordial and initial impulse not yet exhausted, or unless there be a continually sustaining power. It may also be the property of matter to assume crystalline forms,—or, indeed, any forms,—for, *a priori*, there can be no reason why matter should not assume any possible form; but it cannot be the property of matter to assume the exceptional form of a vegetable or animal, without

some initial force, impetus, or constructive agency. If we were to admit the possibility of such transformations without some initial energy, we destroy the whole validity of physical science, and render its reasonings absolutely futile.

This appears to be clearly proven by the fact, that *any* form of complex inorganic matter may be originated at any time, but that we have no experience whatever of the origination of vegetative or animal life, and cannot originate the most simple vegetable production, except by *reproduction*,—that is, by derivation from a parent. We know, and know with nearly as great certainty as science can give us, that the appearance of animal life on the globe, especially in its higher forms, is comparatively recent, and that man does not date above a few thousand years. We know (if science can teach) that man is only a very modern tenant of his mother-earth; and we know also, that matter, so far from discovering a tendency to produce man, does not exhibit the faintest or most isolated instance of any such production. Generation, and generation alone, is the present mode of human introduction into life,—the parent and the parent's cares being absolutely requisite for the early sustenance of the infant man. And as generation must have had a commencement entirely different from itself (in fact, so far as man is concerned, a *creative* commencement), we are necessarily forced to the conclusion, that, at the period of man's introduction, there was in operation an initial power, or agency, essentially distinguished from all the ordinary

potences or qualities of mere matter,—in fact, that there was a cause at work of a different character from the ordinary and stable causes of material nature.

These two cases—the initial force from which the planets derive, or have derived, their motion, and the introduction of man on the surface of the globe—are sufficient for our purpose. Of course, many other cases may be adduced, as every department of science brings its contribution, its confirmation, or its special illustration. The whole history of Nature (the natural history of the world) teems with evidence that, over and above all natural causes, there is an occult, hidden, and mysterious cause, whose existence is revealed *certainly*, but whose character is only very partially laid bare. It is revealed in such a manner as rather to stimulate the awe and wonder of man, than to afford him definite knowledge. It is vastly great, but how great we cannot know,—intensely wise and powerful, but how wise and how powerful we know not. It is a mysterious cause, revealed only a little,—sufficiently showing itself to make us search, but not sufficiently showing itself in the works of nature to enable us to know. It is *above* our comprehension, dwelling in the dim eternities, and darkly clouded in the limitless expanse. It is there *surely*, but *what* this is we understand not, we cannot by searching find it out. We can know a little, and only a very little, in large terms of vague generality,—an infinite mystery seems to combine with a partial revelation,—darkness with

the faintest glimmering of light,—awe, wonder, and fear, with the faintest ray of hope, strayed, as it were from some immortal mansion, and wandering in blessed message through the immensities of space.

Such is, indeed, all we can know from the outward world of creation. It is knowledge, but knowledge folded in perpetual darkness. It is knowledge unknown,—it is mystery,—it is the Invisible hiding himself from the eye of mortal.

The first attribute, then, of the Cause of nature is POWER,—power over the physical creation. The extent or *quantity* of this power must be determined by an examination of the extent of phenomena. A cause must be, at least, as extensive as its effect, but how much greater we cannot say.

That there does exist in nature a distinct power different from the qualities of matter, is a conclusion at which all researches must arrive whenever they pass through the secondary phenomena, and endeavour to probe the primary phenomena. Some initial, specific, and primordial power must have been at work when the solar system was set in motion in a specific series of directions, and under specific laws. It is true that all the secondary phenomena may have followed, and may still continue to follow, from the one original impulse,—combined, as it may be, with the stable qualities of matter,—but that there must have been an initial power, different from those qualities, is an absolute necessity to the human reason. Nor does it matter how far back the process of secondary modes, laws,

mechanisms, or phenomena may be carried (it may be much farther than we at present conceive), but that there must have been somewhere, and at some time, an initial, presiding power, different from the ordinary qualities now in habitual operation—it is a conclusion forced upon the candid reason beyond all possibility of rational dispute.

If, indeed, matter, and every separate particle of it, exhibited a universal tendency to arrange itself into systems, to assume an orbicular motion, and to revolve on its axis, then we should have no reason for inferring a distinctive and external power, but should reckon this tendency as one of the inherent qualities which, like gravity, would be a primary and inexplicable fact. But inasmuch as no such tendency is exhibited by matter,—and, experimentally, we cannot elicit the faintest symptom of such tendency,—and inasmuch, also, as the phenomena are positive and *specific*, we are absolutely constrained to affirm, that these specific phenomena must have a specific cause, of such a quality or nature as would account for them; and this quality is, in the first place, *power*.

Power, however, is of two kinds; it is either *efficient* or *constructive*. It is either of such a character as to originate phenomena, motion, combination, function,—or of such a character as to originate *arrangement*. In the solar system, we have the special illustration of the former; in animal organization, we have the special illustration of the latter. *How did man originate?* is a question which lands



us at once at the consideration of a power of a different quality from the mere initial force necessary to the production of planetary motion. We are not acquainted with the origin of planetary motion; all is mere guess, more or less supported by presumptive evidence. With the origin of man, however, we are so far acquainted, that there appears to be the most indubitable certitude that man is a very recent production. History, tradition, monumental evidence, and geological science, combine to assure us of the fact, that man appeared on the globe only a few thousands of years since. Anterior to that period there is not a trace of man, nor of man's works. What the exact date may be, we cannot tell from an inspection of Nature; but that it is within a very limited period, is borne out by the coincident judgment of all scientific researches that appeal to facts. We assume, then, without hesitation, that man appeared on the surface of the earth only a few thousand years since.

In the construction of man (as, indeed, in the construction of all organism, animal or vegetable; and in the inorganic world, considered as a mechanical device, or mechanism of construction,) we find the most elaborate adaptation of means to an end; and we conclude that there must be a *constructive* cause in Nature, as well as a *potential* cause. We are absolutely constrained to this conclusion, on the same principles that guide us in the ordinary calculation of probabilities. It is probable, beyond all calculable amount of probability, that some cause

must have presided over the formative arrangement of the animal frame. No other explanation will even approach to a possible solution; for even let us suppose, (as some have advanced,) that Nature would in the lapse of ages assume every possible form, this would in no wise solve the difficulty. Matter *might* have a tendency to assume any or all possible forms; but this would in no degree explain the mechanism of animal construction, as presented on the earth. Matter *might*, under this supposition, produce an animal; but the animal kingdom does not consist of mere peculiarity of form—it involves also a long series of *proportionate relations*; and no theory of accidental production, or qualitative *tendency* in the particles of matter, could account for the permanence of these relations, and for the double proportion which we observe in Nature.

Let us take one single instance:—An animal requires nutrition. The food or nutriment is found in the external world, and involves a vast variety of substances. It consists of vegetable and animal productions, in an immense number of different forms. The food, then, is *objective* to the animal. For the purpose of nutrition, the animal is provided with an apparatus consisting of a series of organs, whose function is to assimilate the food to the animal tissues. The organs of digestion and assimilation are *subjective* to the animal. Now, the organs of digestion (like the kinds of food) vary in the different kinds of animal, and their construction and physiological powers point out the particular kind of food

most proper for reception. We have, then, two terms,—the food, which is objective; and the digestive organs, which are subjective. But between these terms—and having a definite relation to both—lie the teeth, or some prehensible apparatus, used for the seizure and primary preparation of the food; and the teeth, to be serviceable, must be suited both to the food and to the digestive apparatus. If the ox had teeth like the shark, the ox could not live; and if the sheep had teeth like the porpoise, the sheep could not live, and *vice versa*. Granting, then, that Nature—if Nature were constantly engaged in manufacturing different forms—might produce an ox or a sheep, what is the probability that a certain system of teeth should find itself in company with a certain digestive apparatus, and in presence of a certain form of food? All this is, to some extent, capable of calculation, according to the ordinary laws of probability. If we were to take only a hundred species of animals having teeth, and to consider the digestive apparatus of each, and the food suitable to that apparatus, and then to calculate the probability against the whole two or three thousand teeth which those animals possess, being arranged as Nature has arranged them,—we should find the probability myriads of myriads to one, that the teeth had not been allocated as they are without a constructive cause.

We have, then, in nature *objectively* :—

*First*, The end produced.

*Second*, The adaptation of means to the end.

The end produced gives us necessarily a *power* ;

and the adaptation of means to the end, gives us necessarily a power of a particular *quality*.

The designation of this quality is of little importance, provided we understand its import. It may be called skill, contrivance, design, even wisdom; and either term is good, if we understand it in a proper manner. If we use the term *design*, we can then say, "There is certainly a power in Nature, and that power is a designing power." But further than this we cannot, as yet, say.

Design, then, objectively, means merely *the adaptation of means to an end*. But what does it mean subjectively; that is, in the cause or power? Here we approach one of the master-difficulties, and one of the most disputed points of the whole argument. Design, if it be taken as *intentional* design, immediately supposes a *mind*, or conscious power; but we have not yet found a mind, nor originated its idea. We have nothing, as yet, projected on the field of contemplation, except the phenomena, the power, and the quality of design. All that we have learnt is compatible with a designing mind; but the question is: "*Is* what we have learnt, taken by itself alone, sufficient evidence of the existence of mind?" That it is sufficient evidence to man, having no other evidence, cannot be thought, because we may fall back on the doctrine of inexplicables, and say, "We admit that there is design, but what the character of the designing power is, we cannot tell, whether it be animate or inanimate, conscious or unconscious."

At this point we shall find a separation between the Christian advocate and the merely scientific man, who looks only to objective nature. The former will pursue his train of reasoning, and, by the aid of a few gentle assumptions, (which are, in reality, truths, but which, at this stage of the argument, are assumptions,) will establish the whole theory of a personally Divine Being, of unlimited power, wisdom, and goodness. The latter will stop short, and if obliged to give some reasonable explanation of the universe, will land in Pantheism, or in some general agency which floats half way between Pantheism and Materialism. At all events, there will be a separation, and each party will consider itself perfectly logical, and will charge the other party with disingenuous dealing.

When an argument of this kind arrives at a particular point of bifurcation, and when each separate route is pursued by men of large intellect and eminent attainment, we shall scarcely solve the difficulty by endeavouring to explore the termination of either course. We must return to the actual point of separation, and sit in judgment on the reasons that induce one party to take the left hand, and the other the right hand. We must endeavour to survey both courses at once, and to comprehend both in the same glance. Some reasons there must be, why men of, perhaps, equal scientific attainment, draw such different conclusions regarding the amount of teaching conveyed in the spectacle of nature.

We believe, then, that Christian writers seldom (perhaps never) succeed in so objectifying nature,

that they look on it as the whole *source* of their premises. This, however, is precisely the great requisite, if we endeavour to found a theological argument on such design as may be apprehended by the understanding when it contemplates the external world. They introduce, illicitly and unconsciously, the idea of *mind*,—an idea which has no place in the field of objectivity. They start with the latent idea of God, and, in fact, use the arguments from nature not as the *sources* of the theological idea, but as the confirmatory proofs that the belief they already entertain is the correct one. To all who are in a similar position to themselves, their course of reasoning is at once valid and instructive; but no sooner are they opposed by those who do not commence with the hidden assumption, than this large confirmation of belief sinks into an argument which does *not* convince the opponents. Instead of stating the reasons that convinced themselves, they appeal to what they consider a proof,—forgetting, in the earnestness of their zeal, that *their own* convictions were not derived from any contemplation of nature. In their haste to argue, they forget to reflect; they are dwelling in a lighted chamber, speaking to men in a dark cell, and telling them to look around and see. A wall of separation is between the two parties; to the one, all things are visible, to the other all things are dark, but the want is the light burning in the chamber of the reason and shedding its rays abroad. This, indeed, makes the whole difference. The Christian advocate carries his light into nature, and illu-

minates it with Divinity; he carries Divinity *into* nature, but does not derive it *from* nature; and, seeing, everywhere around, the bright reflection of the Divine Power and Wisdom, he cannot understand the perverse obstinacy of those who fail to behold what he considers the most palpable and convincing evidence.

On the other hand, the Sceptic, (and there are many such in Germany and France, and some in Britain,) carrying no illumination with him into nature, sees only a dark, stupendous mystery. If candid, he admits a cause, but hesitates to assign positive qualities to that cause,—thinking it, perhaps, possible that matter may involve far higher and more subtle qualities than man has yet discovered. He has many specious objections which need not be enumerated, but which keep his mind floating in a wide sea of uncertainty, swaying backwards and forwards, amid doubts, and theories, and systems, which he scarcely pretends to believe, but only advances as probable or possible. He does *not* find God in nature. He sees an endless flowing—to him endless. It may be chaos emerging into form—and form again dissolving into chaos—again to endure form, and again dissolution. Tell him of goodness, and he replies that he sees the herb for the flock,—but he sees also the flock for the wolf, the lion, the tiger, and the leopard; tell him of wisdom, and he replies that he sees animated nature enjoying all enjoyments by a wondrous mechanism,—but that he sees also in the same mechanism a wondrous capacity

for pain, a most elaborate construction for the purpose of receiving and appreciating torture; tell him of power, and he says matter also is powerful.

To such a man nature is a great mysterious *fact*, whose cause remains hidden from all efforts of the inquiring spirit of man. The sceptic, however, forgets that objective nature (especially when we do not take into consideration the social world of man) is only the first and meanest portion of the field of knowledge. If man had nothing to study but mere material organization and arrangement, it is extremely questionable whether he would arrive at any satisfactory conclusion regarding the cause of nature. Indeed, it may be questioned whether any man or nation ever did arrive at a knowledge of God's existence by the purely objective study of material phenomena; and, if so, why should we suppose an argument to be efficient in the future that has not been the really operating argument in the past? There is some *other* source from which men *do* derive their knowledge of God, and, surely, it is better to advance the argument which *does* convince, than to strain beyond its proper limits and legitimate conclusions, one which does *not* convince.

We consider, then, that the study of external nature (minus the social world of man, which, to us, is objective in its external manifestation) furnishes us with a POWER which is at once potential and constructive (or formatively designing), but what that power is, or what are its other attributes, we cannot



say, till we take under cognisance the phenomena of mental manifestation.

With regard to the *quantity* of the cause of nature, it is not necessary to say much at this stage. Quantity, as applied to power, is of two kinds,—extensive and comprehensive. In the first place, the cause must extend in space, as far as there are any appreciable phenomena; and, in the second place, it must be sufficiently comprehensive to produce the most complex forms with which we are acquainted. It is thus as broad and as deep as creation; but man's experience being necessarily limited, we cannot from Nature assign absolute infinity to the cause of Nature,—not absolute infinity, but only non-finity—limitlessness. It is boundless, to us absolutely boundless; but whether positively infinite in both directions, no argument from nature can inform us.

*Conclusion from objective nature, considered objectively, and not in a higher aspect than zoology.*—The conclusion, then, from objective nature, considered exclusively in its objective form, and not taking into consideration man and his social relations, is,—that there is A POWER to which we can assign no limit, either in *space*, or in *quantity of potency*, or in *constructive skill*. But whether this Power be or be not endowed with *moral* attributes, we cannot affirm, till we have reflected on *man*, or until we have accepted the dictates of our moral intuitions.

§ 4. *The insufficiency and unsatisfactory character of an argument drawn from external nature.*

In alleging that the argument from external na-

ture does not substantiate the moral existence of God to the human reason, I am well aware that the popular literature of Britain is against this conclusion. Paley's watch is considered as irrefutable in England. His argument is ingenious, and handled in the most masterly manner. Paley, in fact, is the typical Englishman,—clear, practical, and utilitarian—all things for advantages, even virtue. But Paley's argument, as a *demonstration*, is utterly unsatisfactory to all who have obtained even a glimpse into the higher philosophy. Far be it from us to depreciate the labours of that most able reasoner, yet we cannot admit his argument to be sufficient, nor any similar argument which rests on the mechanical construction of the material world. His argument must be combined with another, which infuses into it considerations of a higher character. It is the mere external shell-work of an argument. Just as the external and visible creation is not God,—God being Spirit,—so neither is the argument from the external and visible creation fitted to satisfy the moral requirements of the human soul. It must have infused into it spiritual considerations, and a spiritual stream of thought, which have their origin altogether in another region,—which do not derive *from* the material creation, but which, when carried *into* the material creation, and into the general scheme of science, make the world of external phenomena the dwelling-place of the Invisible Mind.

The special reason that induces us to characterise

the argument from external nature as insufficient, is as follows:—

In external nature, we find similar phenomena taking place in similar circumstances; that is, we find *laws* which appear to be *invariable*; that is, we find all things constructed on the plan of cause and effect; that is, finally, we find all things constructed on a *fatalistic* plan.

Whatever the cause of Nature may be, it is, in its material manifestation, *fatalistic*. There is in Nature the most unswerving execution of law. On no occasion does the force of gravity relax its imperious decree,—whether it produce the most beautiful effects of beneficial arrangement, or whether it produce the most painful and grievous disasters. It is *implacable*. It may show us truth, beauty, and goodness, but it shows no *mercy*. Whether man will, or whether man will not; whether he be the direst and most impious rebel against God, or whether he be the humblest penitent; the laws of Nature are inexorable. There is no hope save in observance; one error, one slip, one breach of obedience, and with the absolute certainty of absolute perfection, the laws of Nature proceed to execution. There is no remedy, no redemption, no available penitence. Man may see his error, retract, repent, bewail, but Nature knows not mercy. In exact proportion to the breach of her laws, without increase and without diminution, but in exact proportion, she executes judgment. Young and old, rich and poor, strong and weak, proud and humble, pious and impious, sceptic or

believer, the laws of Nature hold on with passive indifference and absolute impartiality. All is fatalism in the execution; all is cause and effect; similar recurrence in similar circumstances. All is FATE.

Now, Fate, we humbly conceive, is a most insufficient and unsatisfactory result; for let us even suppose that the argument from Nature led us to a *personal* cause, it would still be *fate*, whether administered by a conscious mind, or by the blind forces of matter. It would make no *difference* to our results, because observance in either case would be the only means of escaping from evils, many of which are fallen into unconsciously and unknowingly. We should be equally bound in the iron fetters of inexorable laws, and effect would follow cause with the same unlimited certitude. Death and destruction would pursue their course as usual, and no hope would be held out to man, that in another and future existence there would be any relaxation of the mystery of this fatalistic series of phenomena.

If, then, all the changes that can be observed in the external world, take place according to determinate laws, and if Nature holds on her course absolutely indifferent to the mental feelings of man, we should be obliged to assign a cause of Nature *of a similar character*. We should be obliged to say (if we determined the character of God from the character of Nature), "God is inexorable to human prayers and human repentance; God has given laws to the universe, some of which produce pleasure, and

some of which produce pain;—but man in his ignorance knows not what course to choose, and the result of *ignorance* will be exactly the same as the result of the most wilful *disobedience*.”

Such is the conclusion we should arrive at, if we were to found a theology on the mere construction and operations of external nature. But such a theology would in nowise suit the intuitions of our moral consciousness; for the tremendous discrepancy would at once arise, of a set of creatures endowed with all the moral emotions, with the germs of love, of reverence, of mercy, and of forgiveness, standing in the presence of a Creator to whom all such emotions were utterly unknown,—who regarded not man, nor the feelings of man’s soul, but who executed the outward and mechanical laws of the universe, not deigning to hold the meanest converse with his creatures, nor to enlighten them with a knowledge of himself. What man wants, and what the human heart must seek, is not the Cause of causes, not the fatalistic Power which moves the mechanism of the universe, but the heavenly Father, the Cause and Creator of man’s reasonable soul, the Fountain of man’s moral being, the Father of Mercy, the Infinite who bows in love to the finite. This cannot possibly be derived from the contemplation of physical nature. Hence the argument from physical nature must be regarded as altogether insufficient, unsatisfactory, and incomplete. By itself alone, it never could give us the assurance of a Moral Law-giver and Merciful Father.

### § 5. *Induction from the Social World.*

If the induction from the merely physical world of matter be found insufficient to establish the fact of a Moral Governor, we shall find that the induction from the social world of men is also insufficient, although it may be made to advance the argument into a new region, and to superadd certain new qualitative predicates to the Cause of Nature.

Let us, then, objectify the world of man, and inquire into the results of human conduct.

As every dynamic phenomenon is, of course, supposed to have a cause, and as there is evidently *something* which distinguishes human action from the action of matter, and from the action of instinctive animals, we call this something—*mind*; and we view *mind* as producing those phenomena which cannot be characterised as merely zoological.

When, therefore, we project man into the field of objectivity, we speak of mental phenomena, not as implying psychological phenomena, or mental states, of which we ourselves are conscious, but as meaning, entirely and exclusively, such actions and modes of action as can be *observed* in the outward world of life. When we say that a man is *industrious*, we do not here mean that we can detect an industrious quality of the *mind*, save only as the term represents a mode of *action*. The *outward action* has a certain quality, and, of course, we *infer* a correlative quality in the cause,—and this quality we call *industry*. And so also with *good* and *evil*. We speak not of these as inherent qualities of the mind, which can be appreciated by direct observation, but as qualities

which are first apprehended in the *conduct*, and then transferred to the cause of the conduct.

This view (that we take into consideration mental qualities, exclusively as they are manifested in the outward conduct,) is absolutely necessary, when we profess to make an *induction*. If we were to speak of our own consciousness, we should have departed entirely from the very character of an inductive argument, and all our results would be worthless, because they would be illicit. We must first consider what is in the region of objectivity, and when we apprehend qualities there which refuse to be confounded with the qualities previously known, we assign a *cause* to those qualities; but of the cause itself we know nothing, except through the *manifestation*.

Hence, then, all our definitions must be made with an objective proposition; that is, if a definition consist of a subject, as one member of the equation, and a genus and difference as the other, the subject, as cause, may be viewed as existing in the mind,—but the genus and difference must be entirely *objective*. Thus, when we define industry, we define it as,—

<p>Cause, Industry,</p>	}	produces	{	<p>Phenomenon, Genus—Action. Difference—Constancy, &amp;c.</p>
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This mode, or scheme of definition, applies universally to every mental quality which is inferred from the manifestation of outward conduct.

And it is the very necessity of thus defining mental qualities that destroys an objective argument

derived from the contemplation of man, and causes it to break down, and to produce nothing that will satisfy the human soul; although, when used in another manner, it may produce much to enlighten the understanding.

Let us consider this point. In the physical world, as we have said, we find all things squared on the plan of cause and effect,—all things fatalistic. In the moral world, on the contrary, we do *not* find the same correlation,—we do *not* find a certain course of action producing *invariably* the same results. We find mysteries or events which cannot be traced to a cause (that is, a cause in the category of morals); we find irregularities,—general rules, which are rules only in the *majority* of cases; we find exceptions,—instances which do not coincide with any discoverable law; we find a given course of conduct producing with one man one result, and with another man an entirely different result. So great, indeed, is the diversity, that we can extract no code of action which shall always be sure to secure for us the end we have in view. There is something in the moral world entirely different from what we find in the physical world,—something on which very able reasoners have founded a powerful presumption in favour of a *future* existence, in which rewards and punishments will be dealt out on a clear principle of intelligible system, which is certainly *not* the case in the present world. Generally speaking, it may be so; but the result is not *invariable*,—and invariability constituted the very essence of all that we could learn



from merely physical nature, where all events appear to follow in determinate and recognisable sequences.

Hence, we say, that in the moral world there is a different *quality* from what we find in the material world; and, consequently, we are obliged to super-add to the cause of Nature this new quality.

We argue this point on the single element of *virtue*. Virtue, defined objectively, is either that which causes us to attend to our own welfare, or, that which causes us to attend to the welfare of our fellow-creatures. Such are the elements of an *objective* definition of virtue, which, of course, may also be supposed to combine the whole or part of both definitions. The world of man, then, is constructed on the plan of pleasure and pain, of success and failure, of interest and detriment,—in a word, of good and evil; good and evil being understood in an objective sense, good being pleasure, and evil being pain.

Now, in the world, we observe a reciprocity between the *conduct* of man and the amount of pain he suffers, or causes others to suffer. The prudent man, in many cases, preserves himself from accident and harm, while the rash and reckless expose themselves to pain, suffering, and death. The industrious man often attains wealth, while the sluggard sinks into poverty. The temperate man escapes those diseases which are brought on by intemperance. The honest man often enjoys a well-earned reputation, while the rogue is exposed to shame. The benevolent man often succeeds in benefiting his neighbour, while the

churl, the grasping, and the hard-hearted, alleviate no pain, and confer no pleasure.

In all this there is a reciprocity between the result and the conduct; and the careful study of the sequences would give us a code of objective moral law, which would be, *in the main*, correct. But, further than this: Man universally accords the meed of his approbation to those acts which he esteems virtuous; and this he does, either by a genuine admiration, or by envy, which is approbation putrifying, and not yet corrupted into indifference. And to this, man adds (universally) the idea of punishment and reward. Man believes that the virtuous and good man ought to be more or less happy, and the vicious and wicked man more or less miserable. And hence, all nations, not satisfied with the execution of the laws of Nature, and not content to leave virtue and vice to that reward which each would have received in the ordinary course of the world's events, have invented laws of their own, to supplement the laws of those natural sequences that would have resulted from the constitution of the moral world.

The point, then, is this. Let any definition of virtue or vice be adopted, and we shall find *no* scheme, which, in this world, presents the invariability of physical phenomena. The virtuous man does *not* escape terrestrial pain in proportion to his virtue, nor does the vicious man reap in this world what we consider the appropriate reward of his vice. Obedience to any possible law will not enable man to escape from pain. Pain reaches man through so

many various channels, that no conduct of his own will obviate the occasion of pain. We say the *occasion* of pain, for it yet remains to be considered, whether there are any means by which man may triumph over the occasion, and write himself *content*, even in the midst of his sufferings. Such a scheme would be the grandest discovery conceivable by the human imagination,—that in this battle, from which man cannot escape, he should find himself, not the vanquished, but the victor. Fatalism, Stoicism, and Christianity, have each attempted to solve this problem,—with what success, we may inquire hereafter.

Every law that professes to be *inductive*, must be based on the constancy of facts and the regularity of sequences. When the recurrences are non-constant (as they are in the world of men, in matters of births, diseases, deaths, &c.), we are limited to a probability, which is greater or less according to the proportion of two classes of cases, one of which consists of the cases where a certain event did occur, the other where the event did not occur. If, for instance, we leave a stone unsupported, it falls to the ground ; but it *always* does so ; the fact is constant, and the law may be educed from the constant fact. If, on the contrary, we were to say that children are naturally born *alive*, we have not a constant fact, but only a probability, for many children are still-born. Suppose that out of one hundred births there were ten still-born children, the law would express itself in a fraction, less than unity. It would not, like the law of gravity, assume

the form of  $\frac{1}{100}$ , but only of  $\frac{1}{1000}$ , where the probability that a child would be born alive would be 90 to 10, or 9 to 1. But the one exceptional case must have its cause and its explanation, quite as much as the nine cases, and it must contribute, so far, to determine the character of the causes that presided over the general phenomenon of human birth.

Again, let us suppose 100 persons attacked by typhus, 70 of whom recover, and 30 die. Typhus, then, does not kill, certainly, as a stone falls to the ground, but only in the proportion of  $\frac{3}{10}$ , or 30 to 70.

In all such cases we have probabilities, but with the full understanding that there are definite causes which produce the whole phenomena,—causes as definite as gravity; in fact, that the 70 cases that recovered, would be like stones that actually *were* supported and did not fall, *because* they were supported.

It is an unquestionable fact, that man, as man, pronounces a moral judgment, and predicates responsibility and retribution. Let this fact be explained as it may, it still remains a fact, confirmed by all history, and substantiated by all that we can learn of living races.

Now, let us consider that the sentiment of justice can in no wise be satisfied with probabilities, or with a majority of cases. Its judgment is absolute, and, to be satisfied at all, it must be perfectly satisfied. If we were to discover that 90 out of 100 virtuous men escaped those pains and penalties which befall the vicious, but that, from some cause or other, the re-

maining 10 did *not* escape, but were visited with afflictions, pains, tortures, and death itself, sometimes even *in consequence* of their piety and virtue, we could not infer, from these facts, the certainty of a moral Law-giver, or the existence of a just and righteous God.

We are driven, necessarily, to one of two conclusions,—either that the laws of justice are *imperfectly* executed, or that the present life does *not* constitute the whole existence of man, but that there must remain some future existence, in which punishment and reward shall be meted out with a perfect regard to the conduct of each individual. We have no other alternative: either we must conclude that our moral judgment (which requires perfection to satisfy it, and which, necessarily, must have an originator of a character correlative to itself,) has been placed in circumstances altogether unfitting for its operation, or that the laws of justice are imperfectly executed, or that there is a future existence for man.

That the laws of justice are imperfectly executed in this world, is a fact that has formed the theme of many moralists. The most virtuous men that the world has ever seen, have been subjected to persecutions, stripes, imprisonment, and death. So prominent, indeed, is this fact, that a great authority has said, “If in this life only, we” (that is, *we*, the just, the believers in a righteous God, and the fearers of his name),—“if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable.” Miserable,—that is, not miserable in the emotions of the soul, as may be seen by the same writer, who declares himself *content*;

—but miserable, greatly to be compassioned for his outward circumstances, for those things that enter the statistics of induction, for those things that can be observed and noted as the effects from which we infer the cause of the world, for his stripes and imprisonments, stoned in this place, thrust out of that other place as a vagabond and vile person, treated in all ways as a malefactor, and finishing his career in all probability with martyrdom,—truly, a fact greatly against all inferences that there is a constant and regular administration of justice, and utterly destructive of the theory, that a man who does right will be certain to reap a fitting reward in this world. No such hope is held out to man. Virtue, and much more, especially, the highest form of virtue—Christian virtue—is by no means the straight road to worldly prosperity or advantage. It may be so *sometimes*, and this very exception only complicates the calculation. Joseph is made governor of Egypt, and here virtue is duly rewarded; our sense of right is satisfied when we behold the wronged and injured Hebrew justified from aspersion, and achieving those high dignities for which he was pre-eminently qualified. John the Baptist is sacrificed to a tumbling antic, and he who, less than all other men, seems to have indulged in worldly thoughts or selfish ambitions, is made to pay the penalty of his moral heroism by the surrender of his life. We need not these instances, however. We have only to look abroad on the great page of the world, or to run through the records of history, or to contemplate the existence of

tyrannical power, prevalent everywhere except in the Protestant countries of the earth. How is it, then, that tyrannical powers are continued in existence,—say, for instance, the Papacy or the Moslem power? Can we inductively approach the Papacy, and after we have collected all the facts that illustrate the history of that extraordinary institution, can we say, virtue is rewarded in this world and vice is punished? When we behold martyrs perishing amid flames and tortures, can we say that human conduct is accompanied by its appropriate destiny? Is it the deliverance of the human reason, that “this man read a Bible, and, *consequently*, was put in prison;” “he refused to renounce the convictions of his conscience, and, *consequently*, was first racked and then burnt”? Are these the proper correlatives of the conduct? We know that these are *facts*,—that is, phenomena that must enter the statistics out of which we proceed to extract the character of the Cause that presides over the social world. But are they facts that will satisfy our moral judgment? for if they are *not*, (and certainly they are not,) how can we possibly, from such facts, derive the existence of a Moral Governor who will satisfy our moral judgment?

No doubt, when we go into minute detail, and examine many of the consequences that attend on certain courses of conduct, we do discover the *elements* of a moral law; but when we look at the great fact of human existence, and at the every-day occurrences that take place on the surface of the globe, we see plainly that man—objectively—presents only

a great *confusion*. The moral world, as *fact*, (that is, in its outward manifestation,) is only a mass of disorder, from which no regular laws can be extracted,—if by *law* we understand that the same result shall accompany the same conduct. Similar conduct is not attended by similar results, if we consider different countries or different ages.

Those who have learnt their method from the physical sciences, will, however, object to this, and say, that similar conduct, *in similar circumstances*, will produce the same result. Granted. But when we have granted this, the difficulty will remain as it was before. For, first, we have to ascertain how it happens that generically different circumstances occur in different ages, or in different nations,—and *this* fact must have a major cause quite as much as any other fact; and, second, we find a peculiar quality in the moral law, which requires to be taken into consideration,—namely, its *imperative* character in *all* circumstances.

If, for instance, I attempt to grow corn in one climate, I must attend to the nature of that climate. If my corn requires to be sown in the spring, I must wait for the spring. If suppose in the month of April, I must wait till April comes round. But I cannot establish it as a rule, that I must sow my corn *in the month of April*. I may remove to another hemisphere, where April belongs to the autumn, and no longer to the spring, and I must consider the nature of my new country and new climate, before I proceed to sow my corn.



Again, in all circumstances that do not involve a moral duty, I may legitimately take into consideration my own personal safety or convenience ; I may, indeed, *act according to circumstances*. I may calculate the probable *effects* of my action, and judge whether I shall, or shall not, perform the action. Where the moral law is not implicated, I may use my reason, or indulge my taste.

But it is quite different where the moral law *is* implicated. We are not here affirming what is, or what is not, moral law ; let us suppose *any* moral conviction of the human conscience. Take, for instance, a very general duty, that of *speaking the truth*. If it be my duty to speak the truth in Britain, it is *also* my duty to speak the truth in Tuscany or Spain. I am not at liberty *to lie*, because I have changed my residence, or even because I have the most undoubted evidence, that if I do *not* lie, I shall suffer pains and penalties. I am no longer at liberty to act according to circumstances, but I must obey the moral dictate, come good, come evil. And, consequently, if the moral dictate will not change with change of circumstances, and if my conduct *ought* to be the same, wherever or whenever I am, it is to me as if the change of circumstances had not taken place. It may be perfectly true, that in Britain I may speak the truth without being punished, and that in Tuscany I shall certainly be punished if I speak the truth ; and, so far forth, it may be said, that in similar circumstances the same result will take place, and that the same results do *not* take

place because the circumstances *are* different. All this might be true; and if I were at liberty to square my conduct according to the circumstances in which I find myself in any particular country, I might apply the inductive method, and make a fluctuating law of conduct, which should teach me, in one country to profess Protestantism,—in another, Popery,—in another, Moslemism,—in another, Idolatry, and so forth. But the very essence of a moral law is, that I am *not* at liberty to depart from the moral dictate, come of it what may. And hence, we see truth, in one age and country, rewarded with honourable estimation, and in another age and country, rewarded with pains and penalties, and even death; and this being the case, we cannot from an induction of such facts, decide certainly that there is a moral Lawgiver, who apportions all things according to the conduct of the individual. The moral conscience of mankind cannot be satisfied with less than a *perfect* lawgiver; and as a perfect lawgiver could only be inferred from constant and perfect facts, and as it is plainly evident and universally admitted that the facts are not constant, we cannot, from an induction of the social world, affirm certainly that we have evidence of a perfect moral Ruler.

While we cannot, however, admit that a mere induction from the social world will furnish us with perfectly conclusive evidence that God exists as a righteous Lawgiver and Judge, we must remark those new qualities which this induction does certainly introduce into our philosophy of the universe.

First, *Of pleasure and pain.* In the inorganic world we observe action and reaction. Matter is far from being an inert brute material. It is everywhere—so far as our experience extends—the residence of *force*. It will *do* something, of its own accord, if we may use the expression. And when it apparently does nothing, it is only because there are two or more forces at work, counterbalancing each other, and producing the equilibrium of negation. But though matter is indubitably a most active agent (by no means passive), we consider it as unconscious, as not sentient, and as only operating under general and fatalistic laws.

In the vegetable world, we behold the first and faintest germ of individual sensitivity. A plant is an individual, and, so long as it lives, it has the power of rejecting, to some extent, the influence of the general forces which act imperatively on inorganic matter. When dead, it loses this power, and returns to its material elements. While living, it is active, in a much higher sense, and in many more ways, than inorganic matter. It shoots out its roots to find nourishment, it bends to the light, it opens its flowers in the morning and closes them at evening, it repairs its fractures and heals its wounds; in summer it covers itself with foliage, and in winter it casts its leaves, rejects its juices, and prepares itself for the period of hybernation,—for its great annual sleep. Truly, a plant is a beautiful creation.

Still, although some plants appear to be almost as sensitive as some of the lower animals, we do not yet

introduce the idea of *conscious* sensation. For this we must pass to the animal kingdom. Here we have not only the fact of sensitivity (or special reaction), but of sensation, or conscious appreciation of an external agent. We have also, to a greater or less extent, the fact of locomotion. The plant does not travel, although it will shoot its roots many yards in search of food. The animal, on the contrary, travels for his food; and so far we behold the growth of spontaneous *liberty*. The animal is more *free* than the plant, performs a larger number of functions, and exhibits life under a more complex and elaborate form. The animal kingdom introduces the idea of pleasure and pain, and conscious choice, based on the fact of animal sensation.

This pleasure and pain is the basis of such rude education as we can give to an animal. In the vegetable kingdom we can cultivate and improve, but we cannot *educate*. We cannot teach a plant to do consciously,—we cannot teach a plant *habits*; although even in the vegetable kingdom there are the first faint symptoms of something approaching to the tendency of habit. But we can instruct an animal by means of *association*,—we associate one set of actions with pain, and another set with pleasure, and, gradually, the docile animals learn to avoid the one and to practise the other. Association, however, can scarcely be called *reason*. It is the lowest faculty of reason, which really involves three faculties, namely, abstraction, causation, and association. Of abstraction the animals exhibit scarcely any trace; they are

unprogressive, and abstraction is the great source of all rational progression. Of causation, the more intelligent animals appear to have some endowment—but vague, obscure, and of the lowest form. Of association, however, they understand, if not the full import, at least a very considerable import. By this we teach the horse, the dog, the ox, the monkey, the parrot, and those other animals that learn a certain obedience to the wishes of mankind. Plants may be called instinctive, but then they are fixedly instinctive; animals, on the contrary, have a certain expansive power for the reception of instruction, and they can be taught habits eminently useful to the human race. In this, again, animals exhibit a greater amount of liberty, or of freedom from absolute fatalism. They show the germs of a free nature, which is brought to actual realization in man.

Man consciously selects those circumstances in which he experiences less pain,—and this he does, not merely by association, but by using his faculties of abstraction and causality; first for the analysis of the world, and then for the synthesis of the new conditions he desires. Man clothes his body to protect it from the inclemency of the weather,—he builds a house to shelter him from the sun, the wind, the rain, and the cold,—he makes a fire for his comfort in winter, and a shade for his comfort in summer,—he associates in towns, that he may have pleasant or profitable intercourse with his fellows,—he constructs roads that he may travel with facility, harbours that his sea-borne property may be safe,—he passes to the uttermost

ends of the earth to scrutinise Nature, and to discover whether she contains elements suitable to his many requirements,—he engages in commerce with every tribe of his species, that he may surround himself with conveniences, ornaments, and luxuries. He toils on for ever, to vanquish his pain and poverty,—ever and ever straining after that perfect freedom in which he can *have* what he wants, and *do* what he desires. Pleasure and pain are the moving principles of humanity ; and the mistake of the immoral man is not in pursuing pleasure, but in pursuing it in those wrong courses which are sure to bring an after retribution. The very declaration of the law was, “ This do, and thou shalt *live* ;” the very promise of the gospel, “ Come unto me, all ye who are weary, and I will give you *rest*.” Without the possibility of pleasure and pain it is scarcely possible for us to conceive a moral universe.

Second, *Approbation and disapprobation*. This phenomenon of the social world is as universal as the fact of pleasure and pain in the sensitive world. All men, all nations, and all ages, have exhibited the moral characteristic of approval or disapproval. In the savage, and the man of low passions and degraded habits, this tendency approaches very nearly to the animal instinct which is regulated by mere appetite ; but as the intellect becomes more cultivated, the conscience more purified, and the conduct determined by higher principles, the moral judgment departs farther and farther from a mere instinct, and assumes the form of a free deliverance, based on

an enlightened conception of the higher destinies of man. Courage and fortitude, dexterity and skill, will meet their meed of approbation in all countries, and among all people; but among the less civilised, it will be animal courage; among the more civilised, it will be moral courage. The skill which the savage admires, is the cunning dexterity of the hunter or warrior, which enables him to capture his game or to vanquish his enemy. The skill which the civilised man admires, is the skill of the painter, the poet, the architect, the musician, the logician who convinces, the rhetorician who persuades, the astronomer who reads aright the mechanism of the heavens, the engineer who constructs the complex machine, the naval commander who demolishes his enemy by a new system of tactic, the military commander who achieves unexpected success by intricate combinations, which work together to a definite end. And more especially do we admire the skill which is brought to bear on the world of intellect and morals. The critic, who by his labour and acumen relieves us from perplexing difficulties, elicits not only our admiration, but our gratitude. The barrister, who, by patient and acute examination, succeeds in foiling villany, establishing innocence, or convicting crime, in circumstances in which it appeared almost impossible to extract the truth, is rewarded with our approbation for his skill. And so, also, with the statesman who conducts the affairs of a nation with dexterity,—who secures peace without sacrificing honour,—or who, if war be necessary, with a firm

front, and able understanding, succeeds in inspiring confidence, averting panic, providing for the requirements of his nation, and, by his masterly administration, defeats, almost beforehand, every attempt on the integrity of his country. Such courage and such skill do civilised men admire.

But still, there is a higher region of moral approbation. We admire courage, even though it be exhibited in a bad cause, and still even though it be turned to improper uses. When, however, we find that the course of action has been selected with the most conscientious desire to achieve good ; that self and selfish motives have been renounced ; that pain has been freely and consciously encountered for the benefit of others ; that, under provocation, there has been patience—under difficulty, perseverance—under suffering, fortitude—under injury, a steady and unchanging effort to benefit the injurer ; and, last of all, that nothing has been withheld, even life itself,—that all that could be given has been freely given, and that all that could be done has been freely done,—our moral judgment is completely satisfied, and we *approve* from the very deepest recesses of our moral nature.

In the Christian missionary and the Christian martyr, we have some of the noblest specimens of this self-abnegation,—of lives devoted to the welfare of others, and the honesty of purpose sealed with martyrdom. But in one instance alone do we arrive at that perfection which demands an infinite approbation. In Christ alone do we reach the boundless-



ness of love, which requires as its counterpart our infinite confidence,—our approval grown into legitimate worship, and our worship flowing side by side with the most unlimited approval. In Christ we have the unlimited of all conceivable perfection,—not an abstraction of Deity apprehended by the logical reason, but the real God-man, who lived on earth, walked on earth, and suffered on earth,—at once Sufferer to the uttermost, and Saviour to the uttermost. Christ must necessarily be divine, because no human intellect or imagination could have conceived his character, his actions, or his scheme of redemption; and when we *approve* of his life, and of his death, we do so, not as superiors judging, nor as equals admiring, nor yet as commensurables measuring a greater by ourselves the less, but as human and finite souls, who have found *the infinite approvable*,—that virtue and that goodness beyond which we can conceive nothing, and to which we can conceive no limit.

Again, there is a system pervading, more or less, all people, and, under some phase or other, extending wherever man is found. This is *Justice*. Among savage nations, justice may manifest itself principally in the instinctive form of barbarous vengeance. Where there is no definite occupation of the land, no regular commerce, no system of probity, and, in fact, no *nation*, it is quite easy to perceive that the necessity for a system of distributive justice has not yet arisen; and, consequently, we have no acknowledged code of laws. Justice is thereby left for its

execution, not to the deliberative judgment, but to the spontaneous passion ; and it assumes, among uncivilised people, (as, indeed, it would assume everywhere, were it left to passion,) the character of instinctive vengeance for wrong received. But, at the same time, it is the crude, imperfect, undeveloped, or degenerated idea of justice, which, with the progress of the intellect, is capable of becoming regulated, and subjected to scrutiny. With the growth of trade, agriculture, and intercommunication, there comes also the necessity of regulating the rights of persons and the rights of property ; and distributive justice will make its appearance, and assume social prominence, exactly as the occasion for its exercise is more and more felt by the community. In law, therefore, as in all other matters of human production, there must be a development or progressive growth,—and so, also, in man's feeling of approbation or disapprobation, which has a far wider range, a greater intensity, and a more delicate sense of right, among civilised nations than among rude and barbarous people, whose law is vengeance, and whose execution is force.

Justice, then, according to our conception of its requirements, meets with our approbation, and injustice meets with our disapprobation. We must not suppose, however, that the same rules of justice will prevail in all countries. On the contrary, every tribe and people will have its own understanding of justice, according to its moral, intellectual, and social condition ; and its approbation or disapprobation

will be awarded according to the progress it has made. The wandering Arab may see no injustice in robbing the caravan or the traveller. He pleads custom and prescriptive right. But let that Arab, from a wandering herdsman, be converted into a settled cultivator or honest trader, and he will find that his new condition requires the extension of his former idea of justice, for his own preservation. So long as he is the prey, and there are *others* to be preyed upon, he accepts a few loose rules, which are onesided, to his own advantage. But place him in similar circumstances with the trader, and he will at once discover the necessity of a system of rules applicable to *both* parties. He will no longer maraud, because, by so doing, he is placing himself in danger of being marauded upon. So also with the Borderer, who formerly did not disapprove of reiving and stealing. Now he is transformed into the industrious farmer; and if we were to suspend all law whatever on the Border, and allow the present population to originate rules for themselves, we should find them prohibiting theft and violence, exactly in the same manner that the inhabitants of the Lothians or of Middlesex would prohibit theft and violence. It is not that they have acquired any new elementary idea of justice, but that they have felt the necessity of extending their rules into their new circumstances, and providing laws which shall afford them security and protection,—security and protection being *now* of far more value to them than a license to plunder. Hence, the particular rules of justice will fluctuate

according to the social condition of a people and their social occupations. And hence, also, as the intercommunication between the various nations of the earth goes on and increases, and as the necessity for regulating the communication becomes more and more deeply felt by those who are engaged in trade, commerce, and honest industry, we may confidently expect war and violence to diminish, and, perhaps, ultimately to disappear. And should war and violence disappear, it will be because man, placed in new circumstances, extends his disapprobation to all those things that interfere with the orderly, stable, and regular administration of the world's affairs.

We have, then, in the region of sensitivity, and in the region of man's social existence, the idea of pleasure and pain, and the idea of approbation and disapprobation, which are the preparatives for an entirely new series of ideas, namely, our conceptions of punishment and reward.

We must, therefore, consider, thirdly, *Punishment and reward*.

Justice must be divided into distributive and retributive,—the first being *regulative*, the second *corrective*. The first disposes and arranges all the elements of society in such a manner as to meet with our moral approbation; the second assumes to correct any departure from the same, to inflict pain on the disturber of moral harmony, and by the exhibition of punishment to deter others from future transgression.

Retributive justice has, therefore, three distinct

ends,—to correct any departure from the conditions prescribed by distributive justice ; to inflict penalty on the voluntary agent causing the departure ; and to provide (so far as holding out motives for right conduct can provide) for the future preservation of society.

Retributive justice is, therefore, corrective, penal, and preservative ; and retributive justice is universally, in some form or other, exhibited by man, varying, of course, from the summary and instinctive vengeance of the savage, to the calm, impartial, and deliberate proceeding of the civilised man in his elaborate courts of law. Retributive justice is, then, the counterpart of distributive justice ; the latter, in itself, is an unalloyed good ; the former is a necessary evil,—evil in this sense, that it is much better when no retribution is required ; and necessary in this sense, that if there were no retribution, there would be greater evil.

When, therefore, man contemplates any breach of distributive justice, he does, according to his greater or less advance in civilization, entertain a certain idea of punishment ; and when he contemplates any act of merit, (that is, any act which surpasses the requirements of mere justice,) he entertains the idea that the meritorious actor is worthy of reward.

Punishment and reward pervade human society wherever human society is found. Variations there are in the mode of administering these, but the radical idea is everywhere present. Punishment may vary, from the slight expression of disapprobation,

(which, from those of higher rank or superior station, is considered as punishment,) up to the loss of liberty, property, or life itself. And reward may vary from the simple approval, which is grateful to our feelings,—from thanks or acknowledgments expressed in words,—up to titular honours, offices of trust or power, grants of money or lands, or even to royal or imperial dignity.

But although we can look abroad upon society, and see everywhere the indications of a moral element of justice ; and although we see punishment and reward of some kind or other following man wherever man is found,—there is irregularity, inconstancy, contradiction, want of order, and want of system, universally present. There is no harmonious mechanism, working like the creations of nature towards a definite end and purpose, but only the broken and disordered fragments of some divine institute, which will not perish, and yet is all disordered and out of joint. Man's idea of justice, like his idea of religion, is of divine origin, and imperishable. But, like his idea of religion, it is corrupted through the influence of his fallen nature ; and we can no more inductively infer the character of the original Lawgiver, from the exhibition of punishment and reward in this world, than we can infer the character of the true God, from a comparison and induction of all the religions professed on the surface of the globe.

It may be alleged, however, that this is man's doing. True, but man himself is a portion of nature ; and if we were to draw our character of the Maker

of man, from our study of man, we should be obliged to conclude that the Author of man was imperfect, and that the Great Cause, which made material nature with such harmonious wisdom, had failed in an attempt to produce a moral and intelligent creature. If the effect be so radically imperfect, as man is in his moral characteristics, we cannot possibly infer from such an effect a perfect cause. Such a conclusion would be entirely illegitimate; and when we find that, notwithstanding the moral imperative impressed upon the conscience, there is a general prevalence of crime and injustice on the earth, we cannot, from such a spectacle, inductively infer the existence of a perfectly just and righteous originator of man.

But it is not true that the injustice exhibited by man is the only difficulty. We find the elements of nature dealing out results which by no means coincide with our intuitional feelings of approbation and disapprobation. We observe, for instance, a shipwreck taking place, in presence of certain individuals on the shore. A life-boat is at hand, and volunteers are required to man it. The brave step forward, and the pusillanimous stand still, in prudent, or in coward silence. The brave embark—reach the wreck—and by prodigies of exertion save the exhausted crew. But in this struggle with nature, one man is washed overboard and is drowned; another, perhaps, in the performance of a most essential duty, has a limb broken; another receives a blow on the head, and sinks into a hopeless idiot; the rest return on shore,

and are rewarded liberally. Now, how shall we read this event? Surely Nature has not portioned out things aright. The manliest of them all is dead. Sober, prudent, resolute, and of great skill, that dead man was dux and leader in all enterprises. Nature has awarded him death. The next is a hard-working man, with a numerous family dependent on his exertions. Nature awards him a broken limb, long sickness, and final amputation. The next, young, active, free-hearted, full of merry jests and quaint sayings, a true seaman,—who is there, as it were, by accident,—run home after a long voyage to see his mother, to whom he has devoted all his available wealth,—Nature awards him idiocy. To those who would not go, Nature has awarded safety. Can we, then, from such facts, infer the intentional and wise distribution of natural award? On the contrary, we are forced to the conclusion, either that our own ideas of justice are *not* corroborated by the events of nature, or that there is some hidden and secret scheme underlying all the outward phenomena; something to be developed and laid bare hereafter; some clearing up of this terrestrial mystery; some future explanation of these inscrutable events; some grand justification of the perfect law of absolute and immutable right. Induction will not achieve for us that which is necessary for our satisfaction, namely, the coincidence of our moral judgment with the outward event, and of the outward event with our moral judgment.

There must be some explanation of the moral universe entirely different from all that can be learnt



from induction. The elements are there,—the faded records of primeval innocence and primeval rectitude,—straggling rays of heavenly light flicker through the darkness, enough to tell us that holiness is not a dream, but only a lost remembrance of the past, and a possible reality of the future; wrecked, ruined, and forlorn, man struggles on enveloped in the impenetrable folds of mystery,—his soul agonising for the light of knowledge,—his conscience ever burning with the immortal fire which bespeaks divinity, yet passion, ignorance, and sin ever engaged in obscuring the celestial flame.

It remains, then, for us to inquire whether any such explanation can be found; whether any scheme has been presented, that will clear up this world of moral ruin and disaster; whether any theory will solve the grand equation, whose terms are *an intuition of perfection* for the one member, and *a world of moral confusion* for the other,—an intellect and a conscience ever pointing to the ineffable good, and a conduct hopelessly at issue with all that the soul approves.

In summing up, therefore, what we learn from an induction of the objective region capable of being apprehended by the intellect, we have, finally,—

A POWER to which we can assign no limit, either in space, in quantity of potence, or in constructive skill. Also, we have the fact of pleasure and pain, of approbation and disapprobation, of justice and injustice, and of punishment and reward.

But we have also the fact, that when we turn from

the region of physical nature, to the region of moral and social nature, the order and perfection of constant result is lost, and that the moral world is a confused, disordered, and discordant region, which presents perpetual imperfection.

Hence, then, we have this alternative. We must conclude *either*,—1st. That the CAUSE of the moral world is imperfect in power, or in intention. In *power*, if we suppose the intention to have been the construction of a moral world, pure, innocent, and holy, and that the realization of such a world failed for want of power; in *intention*, if we suppose the present imperfect moral world to have been exactly such as was designed. Or, 2d. We must conclude that the world was once fair and perfect, man innocent, and rectitude of conduct answering to the perfection of moral dictate,—and that some event, some vast catastrophe, has occurred, whereby the primeval harmony has been disordered, and man, from his first estate of innocence, reduced to ignorance, depravity, and corruption.

One of these alternatives we *must* accept. If the character of a cause can be inferred from its effects, and if we accept the present world as that from which we are to infer a cause, then, undoubtedly, must we arrive at an *imperfect* cause.

If, on the other hand, we admit the doctrine of a catastrophe, we have the possibility of a perfect cause; and, also, if we admit that man may possibly have fallen from a pure estate, we have at least the possibility of a hope that he may be *restored*.

Such, then, is our alternative, and it remains for us to inquire whether there is any authentic record of a primeval state of purity, in which the imperative of the conscience was not, as now, the condemning voice of an immortal Judge, but the well-spring of a spontaneous rectitude, which flowed harmoniously from the native innocence of primeval man.



*I've just been learning the lesson  
Of life, the sad, sad lesson of loving—*

## BOOK V.

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### THE INTUITIONAL, OR COMPOSITE ARGUMENT.



## BOOK V.

# THE INTUITIONAL, OR COMPOSITE ARGUMENT.

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## CHAPTER I.

### HOW MAN ARRIVES AT A KNOWLEDGE OF THE DIVINE EXISTENCE.

#### SECT. I.—EVOLUTION OF THE INTUITIONAL ARGUMENT.

BEFORE proceeding to the consideration of Revelation, the argument which actually *does* induce man to believe in the existence of God must be adduced.

This is termed the *Intuitional Argument*, to distinguish it from the *a priori* and *inductive* arguments ; but it must be distinctly premised that this name is selected, not because it expresses the import of the method, but merely because it may be used as an initial *name*.

Intuition *enters* into the argument, and so far the argument is intuitional. Intuition is the starting-point—the primary origin of affirmation—the first, but only the first element of a process of argu-

mentation, which involves *also*, and as particularly, the *a priori* argument and the inductive argument.

The present argument is, therefore, one of *combination*, in which all the various methods are made to furnish a certain portion of a complex scheme; and the ultimate conclusion is, in fact, *not* a conclusion from either method isolated and disjointed from the other methods, but a conclusion derived from the consideration of the whole.

The weakness of the *a priori* argument is, that it cannot furnish us with a *fact*,—only with a mode of *thought*. The weakness of the inductive argument is, that it cannot approach infinity; and also, as moral evil is undoubtedly existent in the world, the existence of that evil is an insuperable barrier to the certain conclusion that the Cause of the world is infinitely perfect and good. This assertion, however, must be cautiously limited to the mere method of *induction*. Not that we *cannot* arrive at the evidence of God's perfection, but that we cannot arrive at that evidence by mere *induction*, because we must, according to the very first laws of induction, assign to the Cause, the qualities we find in those effects from which we make our induction. In fact, an impartial induction of the moral and social world would be more likely to land us in the Manichæan admission of two distinct causes, the one good and the other evil,—and there we should end in an inscrutable mystery.

Let us consider that there are five elementary sources from which man derives knowledge.

These are, 1. Intuition; 2. Metaphysic; 3.



Observation, physical or external ; 4. Observation, psychological or internal ; and, 5. Revelation. If we read these in the above order, we have them ranged *logically* or *synthetically* ; if we reverse the order, we have them ranged (omitting Revelation) *chronologically* or *analytically*. That is, intuition is *logically* anterior to metaphysic,—metaphysic to observation ; but *chronologically*, observation is anterior to metaphysic, and metaphysic to intuition.

1. The first source gives us the knowledge of our own existence, and our indubitable belief in an external world.

2. From the metaphysical source we derive our knowledge of abstractions and abstract relations.

3. From the physical source we derive our knowledge of the external world extended in space.

4. From the psychological source we derive our knowledge of the special phenomena and operations of mind.

These five sources are essentially distinct,—not capable of being reduced one into the other, and each furnishing a modicum of truth special to itself, which is not furnished by the other sources.

The second source is the origin of the *a priori* argument, the third of the physical *a posteriori* argument, the fourth furnishes the psychological inductive argument, and the fifth is the origin of the scriptural argument.

It is plainly evident, however, that metaphysic can only determine the necessary forms of hypothetical relations, and never, by any possibility, can lead us to *a fact*,—that is, to any truth whatever

that involves a concrete and real existence. Even the mathematical sciences determine only the form of our own thoughts, with regard to quantities, spaces, and numbers, and by no means inform us whether there are any real entities that can be numbered, measured, or surveyed. Hence, an *a priori* argument of any kind, whether relating to theology or to any other subject whatever, can only establish the axiomatic principles on which we are constrained to proceed,—it never can transcend or surpass the region of abstraction,—never can go further than to assert, that, if a certain hypothesis be true, then certain consequences follow, according to the laws of cognition. But the hypothesis itself is, as I have previously shown, extra-metaphysical; and to convert this hypothesis into a *fact*—into a truth relating to some actual reality—we must address ourselves to some other source, and derive our knowledge from some other region. If, for instance, we endeavour to begin with certain considerations relating to *being* (as all *a priori* arguments do, more or less, begin), it is evident that metaphysic fails to establish the very first fact, without which all its after conclusions or propositions are only empty abstractions; this first fact being the fact that there *is* being,—a proposition which metaphysic must invariably assume, and cannot possibly prove. Now, this fact must have an *origin*, and this origin must be either in the realm of physics or psychology,—it must either be the external objective world, or it must be the inward world of thought, emotion, and

mental experience. A fact must derive either from the ME or from the NOT-ME, but it cannot derive from mere abstraction. Metaphysic gives us the laws of thought and the necessities of thought, but it does not give us the substantive element of thought, unless we commence with facts derived from a non-metaphysical source,—just as mathematic gives us the laws of calculation, but can never lead us to an astronomic fact, unless we begin with an astronomic fact from which another may be inferred. When once we have made certain observations regarding the planets, calculation may prove to us the existence of a new planet which has never yet been discovered,—that is, calculation may prove to us the necessity of admitting a local cause for certain perturbations; but all the calculation in the world could never prove to us the *first* fact, namely, that there *are* planets. This must be obtained from *observation*.

The metaphysical or *a priori* source, therefore, furnishes us only with a certain portion of our method of calculation. It furnishes the laws, but not the materials of the argumentation.

Again, the inductive method, by itself alone, can never establish a theology, because it never can lead us to a *mind*. No inductive method, applied to the external world, can ever lead us to a mind. We are told that there is design in nature, and that design is an attribute of a conscious mind. So it may be, but *that* fact could never be learnt by induction; and if we had confined ourselves strictly to induction, we never should have known that fact, and could not

have affirmed it. The *idea* of mind is extra-inductive, because mind involves consciousness, and *no* objective experience, observation, or induction, could ever originate the idea of consciousness. If we were to predicate consciousness wherever we observe operative or constructive design, we should make either matter or force conscious, and by this method we should, as the ancients did, fill the universe with a mythology of gods and goddesses. Nay, induction, instead of being able to lead us to a *mind*, cannot even lead us to a *force*. Force is never predicated through any induction whatever,—force being the product of the axiom, “Wherever there is motion, there is force.” The laws of *motion* are inductive; that is, a thousand motions all differing in actual circumstance may be found capable of expression in one and the same general formula, and this is induction,—which, in fact, is nothing more than *the classification* of the motions. Whatever induction may be applied to, or wherever it may be employed, it is nothing more than *classification*, and classification can never transcend the objects classified.

It may be *true*, that design implies mind, but this truth does not belong to induction, any more than if we had never seen an animal of any kind, the foot-prints on the sand would have been inductive evidence of animal life. If we had never seen an animal, and always had remained in ignorance of our own foot-prints, the track of a lion, a bear, or an otter, would have been no evidence of a living creature; it would have been merely a mark in the sand, of a

peculiar form; it would have betokened nothing whatever connected with animal existence; it would have been a mere fact, and nothing more. Yet, on these said foot-marks we could have performed a whole course of induction. We could have ascertained that the roundish mark, with distinct indentations, led invariably to and from the water,—that the great clumsy mark led frequently to trees, and sometimes disappeared at a hollow tree,—that the other mark led to and from a cave, &c. All this induction could be performed without our having the slightest notion of the animals themselves,—the marks would be only marks, and by induction we might arrive at the *laws of the marks*. But let us now suppose that we made our own track in the sand, and observed it. We should then, from analogy, consider the former marks to have been made by some different kinds of men; and we should guess, very obscurely, and in great doubt, about their forms. But it is plainly evident that we did not get the idea of a living being from the marks, but from *ourselves*. Let us now suppose that we found a book of drawings, with a full description of the lion, the bear, and the otter—with prints of their feet, and a description of their habits. We should at once recognise the connection between the marks on the sand and the prints in the book; and we should understand *why* the otter-marks led to the water, the bear-marks to the tree, and the lion-marks to a den. Still, the origin of our idea of a *living creature* was with ourselves. So it is with every induction—

Paley's watch, or any other. If we do not carry to the watch the *idea* of mind, assuredly we shall not find it there; but if we do carry with us the idea of mind, the watch is good evidence, both of the fact that the mind exists, and, to some considerable extent, of the character of the mind that presided over the construction.

Let us, however, consider another case. Astronomy is a science of duplicate origin. It is called an inductive science; but this is a misnomer. Induction could only give us the laws of the apparent motions, and never could reach the Newtonian idea of a universal attraction or *force*. But, even passing over this circumstance, we have in astronomic science the mathematical element, and the observational element, each furnishing a certain portion of that which we understand by astronomy. The mathematical element is *a priori*, the observational element is *a posteriori*. Let us, then, suppose that we were to ask, What kind of astronomy can be constructed with either element *alone*, as has been done with regard to *theology*? It is plain that the mathematical element contains only the general doctrine of number, quantity, space, and force, and can never, by any possibility, discourse of real planets. It may make hypotheses, and calculate what would take place if certain hypothetical planets, endowed with hypothetical properties, were placed in certain hypothetical positions and relations; but it has no possible means of introducing the real orbs, whose motions are to be analysed and explained.

On the other hand, the observational method is

equally impotent, if it reject the assistance of mathematics. It would discourse of orbs, of their appearances, of their apparent positions, apparent motions, and apparent phenomena (eclipses, &c.), but never, without mathematics, could it determine the distances, dimensions, velocities, and real phenomena, which we assume to constitute the essence of astronomical science.

Now, when we speak of an *a priori* argument, or an *a posteriori* argument, and endeavour to pursue either method singly, are we not exactly in the same position as if we were to attempt the production of astronomical science by mathematics, to the exclusion of observation, or by observation to the exclusion of mathematical calculation? To produce astronomy, both observation and calculation are imperatively necessary,—why, therefore, shall we continue to attempt in *theology* a process of proof, or *a method*, which would be utterly inapplicable in astronomy?

The *a priori* method cannot furnish us with a *fact*; the *a posteriori* method cannot furnish us with a *principle*, being, as it is, merely a *classification*; and this consideration proves the necessity of a *composite* argument, in which the various methods are made to work together, and to evolve a scheme which could not be elaborated from either method alone.

We have, then, to state,—

#### THE REQUIREMENTS OF A THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

1. The first requisite for a theological argument is *a fact*.

2. The second requisite is *a principle*.

3. The third requisite is *a method of determination*.

Each of these three is derived from a *different source*,—from an elementary, original, and fundamental source of knowledge. The *fact* is derived from *intuition*. The principle is derived from *metaphysic*. And the method of determination is derived from *observation*—external and physical, or internal and psychological.

These, then, are woven together into a scheme, exactly in the same manner as we construct one of the mixed sciences, where intuition gives us the belief in the existence of matter,—metaphysic (or mathematic, which is only metaphysic applied to number, quantity, and space), the principles of calculation,—and observation, the method of determination.

The *fact*, then, is that of *our own existence*: I am a mind.

The *principle* is, that mind, by logical division, must be either finite or non-finite; and if I am a finite mind, there must be an infinite mind.

The *method of determination* is the induction of all that I can ascertain by observation, physical or psychological, to determine the character of my own mind, and of the Infinite Mind, if I be finite.

First, then, of the *fact*,—I am.

This, of all imaginable or possible truths, is the first and most indubitable. Descartes was right when he said, “*Cogito, ergo sum*,” although some have attempted to show, that his little phrase con-



tains a truism,—as if *he* had not seen this as well as they, and probably understood its import much better than they. What *evidence* have I that I am? I *think*, therefore I am. Existence may be as real in coma or in dreamless sleep, but so long as I am *unconscious*, I may exist, it is true, but I cannot *know* that I exist. Consciousness, then, is the necessary condition, not of my *existence*, but of my *knowledge* of my existence, and the great psychologist was right; I think, *therefore* I am.

*What* am I? is a different question, and requires a method of determination. This is an after business. *That* I am, is certain; *what* I am, is a matter of long, painful, and arduous investigation.

The first fact is an intuition, which never varies in certitude (always, of course, omitting considerations of *disease*,)—it neither waxes nor wanes with the advance of knowledge. It is as potent a truth for the savage as for the sage; for the unlearned, as for the scholar; for the fool, as for the ablest and the wisest. All else may vary more or less; the circle of our knowledge, our belief, our conviction, may expand or contract, may issue forth in search of the Infinite, or narrow downward to the brief limits of mere animal desire; but the centre of the circle remains as the immovable point, which is *absolute*. The radii may have a longer or a shorter course: the area of our consciousness may be that of the boor, whose hut and field are the boundaries of almost all his thoughts; or it may be that of some majestic genius, to whom it has been given to weigh

the planets in the balance of his reason, or, higher still, to pierce with intelligent apprehension through the outer garment of the universe, and grasp the moral relations of the spiritual world: it may be that of Giles, who whistles at his plough; or that of Newton, weighing in his giant intellect the orb of night; or that of Chalmers, whose genius reflected the heavenly light that had fallen on his moral nature;—but with one and all, the consciousness of self-existence is the very same fact,—no greater in the thoughtful philosopher, no less in the thoughtless ploughboy. It is, like the centre of the circle, *absolute*; it is *there*, but it admits of no measurement and no dimension.

The fact of our existence, then, is a primary intuition. All the reasoning in the world leaves the fact exactly where it was before,—no acquisition of *knowledge* being capable of giving to this fact the smallest imaginable degree of expression. It is the foundation fact of our whole universe of thought; without it there could be to us nothing.

Assuming, then, that a knowledge of my own personality is given by intuition, and that it is indubitable, we proceed to point out a radical difference in the method or scheme of the composite argument, from the method of either of the other arguments. The *a priori* and *a posteriori* arguments are *linear*. The first starts from principles, and pursues a logically linear course towards its conclusion. The latter starts from facts, and pursues an inductively or inferentially linear course. We maintain, then, that *any*

argument which pursues a merely linear course, is necessarily insufficient and incomplete.

The composite argument is *not* linear ; it is alternative and constructive. This difference is of the most radical importance. Every writer has acknowledged that the *a priori* argument can only proceed legitimately a very short way, beyond which it can go no further. So, also, with the inductive method ; it is limited. Both methods must necessarily be limited, because they cannot (otherwise than illicitly) transcend the premises from which they originally set out,—and they set out with only one kind of premises, whereas, for a complete argument, we require several kinds of premises.

The superiority of the composite argument is, that it is not limited ; that while it professes to adhere as strictly as the others to the legitimate use of each particular kind of premiss, yet it introduces at certain stages, and for particular purposes, every kind of premiss, intuitional, metaphysical, inductive, moral, or revealed ; and this it does on the principle of gradual expansion, which enables us to continue the argument to any extent, and not to stop short, merely because the method we have exhausted can carry us no farther.

Hence, intuition goes only a little way, and we introduce metaphysic ; but intuition, combined with metaphysic, is soon exhausted, and we introduce induction ; but these three combined are also exhausted, and we introduce morals ; but even these are unsatisfactory, and we introduce revelation. It

is one and the same argument throughout; but it consists of different stages, and, like a real science (astronomy for instance), it takes periodic expansions, and proceeds to any possible length that can legitimately be attained by the use of any materials that are fairly within our reach. Whatever is true in any department, is, therefore, worked into this argument for the purpose of elucidating some point or other,—all that is necessary being that we should employ our materials on the fairest principles of logic, and not distort them for uncandid purposes, or from too ardent a desire to obtain a conclusion which our premises would not legitimately warrant.

But the composite argument has not merely the advantage of introducing every kind of premiss. I have said that it is not *linear*. It does not consist merely in the *sequence* of one argument after another, for in that case it *would* be linear. It is a true composition,—that is, the elements are *combined*, not merely placed in juxtaposition. Thus, when we find our metaphysical method exhausted, we do not abandon it and proceed to the inductive method. On the contrary, we introduce the facts of induction into the formulæ which were previously void of material, and we *apply* our *a priori* method to the truths that were procured by the *a posteriori* method. There is thus a continual *alternation*, just as there is in the real science of astronomy; where we do not first exhaust our mathematics, and then proceed to observation, but where we continually alternate observation and calculation, and weave the two to-

gether into the same identical scheme. So it is in the construction of a building, or in any construction whatever. We must have the *material* and the *method of procedure*. Without the plan and method, the materials could only be *classified*,—there would be no construction. But without the materials, the plan would remain only a plan, and there would be no building, except in hypothetical existence. The material must be wrought *into* the plan. We do not first produce the plan, then abandon it, and turn to the consideration of the qualities of the materials. Not at all; we preserve our plan, and keep it constantly before us,—taking care only to fill into each particular part such materials as possess suitable qualities, and can fulfil the purposes we require.

Hence, all mixed science (which is, in fact, the only *real* science, for mathematics does not contain a *fact*, and the descriptive sciences contain only classifications, more or less elaborate) proceeds universally on the principle of *alternation*. Mathematical science is *linear*, and so is an *a priori* argument; but as mathematical science cannot prove any thing more than *relations*, so neither can the *a priori* method, of which mathematics is only one illustration or department.

We have, then, as our very first proposition—which is a proposition of *fact*—the intuition of our own personal existence. *I am* is the indubitable of my ontological consciousness; as *I ought* is the imperative of my moral consciousness.

We now approach one of the most remark-

able and one of the most interesting phenomena of cognition, namely, that the moment a fact is given to the human intellection, it is given under certain *conditions*—which conditions are not contained in the fact itself, but spring from the reason in its contemplation of the fact.

This formal deliverance of the reason is termed metaphysic, and metaphysic consists of those abstract or axiomatic *schemes*, into which we instantly locate the materials of our knowledge. The elucidation of this portion of philosophy was the object of the illustrious Kant, when he asked the important question, “How is a synthetic proposition *a priori* possible?” No sooner do we appreciate any fact, or any real object of existence, than we find our knowledge assuming a *form*, which appears to be inherent in the human intellect as intellect. We cannot arbitrarily think, neither can we remain the mere recipients of impressions. We must think through forms, or abstract categories, and those categories have definite laws attached to them—the laws of the higher logic. The form of our thought is as much determined by the laws of our intellection, as the material of our thought by intuition or experience; and though there may be a vast power in man to *use* his intellect in any given direction, and for any specific purpose, yet he can only use it, as he uses his body, or the powers of nature, under primordial laws, which determine the mechanism of the process. Without this formal determination, man would not be rational,—he would be merely sensitive and percep-

tional,—science would be impossible, and the mind, instead of being a *person*, with a spontaneous agency, would be only a reflecting mirror, standing in the presence of phenomena, and shadowing forth the series of changes which roll ceaselessly onward.

Kant, however, in asking the question, “How is a synthetic proposition, *a priori*, possible?” asked a question, the language of which was liable to be misunderstood, and the meaning of which was liable to be misstated by the empirics. The term *a priori*, with Kant, meant “that which is logically antecedent;” with the empirics it means, “that which is chronologically precedent.” Now, in the latter sense there can be no *a priori* proposition of metaphysic, for the metaphysical axiom (and the axiom in its true sense was all that Kant meant) only originates chronologically when some fact of intuition or experience has been presented to the mind. But it is *a priori* in this sense, that it has no origin in any other proposition that logically contains it; it is primary, spontaneous, and intuitional,—intuitional, not in the sense of being contained in the mind were there no fact present to the mind, but intuitional in the sense that, *when* a fact is presented to the mind, the axiom makes its appearance as the necessary element of belief which accompanies the fact, and co-ordinates it into abstract categories. So that, if we were to drop out the fact, after we have seen it arrange itself in a certain form, we should find an abstract proposition remaining, which proposition is metaphysical and not real,—that is, it is abstract and not concrete.

And we should find, also, that the abstract proposition had carried us beyond the original fact, and had transcended the original fact, giving us to know things which the fact did not contain, and truths which are original and underivative. When, for instance, we become conscious of *a change*, we become also indubitably and universally convinced that a change must have a *cause*; and here we have a universal and abstract proposition annexed to a real fact. But this proposition has only a chronological origin in the fact. It has no logical origin, no logical antecedent from which it could spring, or out of which it could be evolved. It is a primary intuition of direct knowledge, by aid of which all other subsequent knowledge must range itself in particular form, and assume systematic order. It is the presiding principle of all dynamics, of all astronomy, of all mechanics, chemistry, electricity, physiology, &c. It is the axiom of the whole world of change, and by it we work in every region in which we construct a science out of apparent phenomena.

Assuming, then, the fact of personal existence to be indubitable, we next inquire into the conditions under which we necessarily think our existence. These conditions I have already announced in discussing the *a priori* argument, but I repeat them at length.

*Necessary division*—All persons must be either self-existent or not self-existent.

*Philosophical necessity*—All persons not self-existent, must derive their existence from a self-existent person.



*Logical necessity*—If there be a person not self-existent, there must be a person self-existent.

*Fact*—*I* am a person not self-existent.

*Conclusion*—Consequently, there is a self-existent person.

*Converse conclusion by negation*—If there be not a self-existent person, then am I not. But this being impossible to the consciousness, the argument entails the absolute necessity of my admitting the existence of a self-existent person.

In this argument, two propositions will arrest attention: First, The philosophical necessity; and, Second, The fact. We shall, therefore, consider the proposition, "A person not self-existent, must derive existence from a self-existent person." The question, then, is, "Whether is this proposition necessary, or not necessary?" Let us, then, translate it into its more general form, and we shall find that it contains two propositions, and is, in fact, the concise expression of the axioms, "Every change must have a cause;" and, "Every change must have an *adequate* cause." Whatever we may *say*, we are compelled to think that every change must have a cause, and all dynamic science whatever is based on this axiom. We regard this proposition, therefore, as indubitable. We must also admit, that every change must have an adequate cause, and the only question is, whether the cause of a mind must be itself a mind.

It is plainly evident, that if we were to affirm, "All *matter* not self-existent, must derive existence

from self-existent *matter*," we should affirm a proposition that is erroneous. Why, then, do we make the affirmation with regard to *mind*, when it does not hold good with regard to *matter*? For this reason:—A cause must be conceived of such a nature as to account for the effect. Now, all that is necessary in a cause is, that it should be *potentially* sufficient; and the cause of matter need only comprehend the power of producing matter, and need not consist of any assignable material whatever. Here, then, we have the operation of that most useful doctrine of extension and comprehension, which has been elaborated by Sir W. Hamilton. A cause must be correlative with its effect both in extension and in comprehension; and, therefore, when we assign a *mind* as the cause of mind, we do so because mind is the highest of all objects with which we are acquainted; and, consequently, a dependent mind must have a cause, *at the least*, as high in comprehension as itself. Thus, we could not assign *space* as the cause of *matter*, because space does not comprehend potentially the qualities that matter comprehends. Neither could we assign inorganic matter as the cause of organism,—nor matter at all as the cause of mind. The cause of matter must contain, *at the least*, attributes sufficient to account for the qualities of matter, and the cause of mind must contain, *at the least*, attributes sufficient to account for the qualities of mind. And, consequently, mind being the highest potency with which we are acquainted, it must have a cause, *at the least*, as great in comprehension as itself;

otherwise we should be assigning effects of a character superior to the cause from which they sprung. Hence, the cause of a mind must be, *at the least*, a mind,—a conscious agent of some kind or other,—for we cannot conceive thought issuing out of a universe in which there was no thought, any more than we could conceive matter issuing out of a universe in which there was only blank space. There must be a *potence* sufficient to account for the product, and this, in the case of mind, can only be a conscious and intelligent power.

The second proposition that requires attention is the fact, “I am a person not self-existent.” How, then, do we know this fact?

It is plainly evident, that although a knowledge of our existence be given by direct intuition, a knowledge of our *mode* of existence cannot be derived from intuition, but must be derived from experience. Experience, therefore, comes into play, to assure us that we are limited and not infinite.

At this point, therefore, we can link to our previous argument experience or observation,—first, to tell us what we are ourselves; and, second, to tell us the character of that great Mind, from which we suppose our own to proceed.

## SECT. II.—EVOLUTION OF THE MORAL ARGUMENT.

Here we have arrived at the most important part of a strictly natural theology, namely, at the grand bifurcation of knowledge,—at the division of the uni-

verse into the ontological or natural, and the deontological or moral. In the ontological division we inquire, *What is?*—in the moral division, we inquire, *What ought to be?*

In the ontological division we are engaged with the NOT-ME, in the categories of quantity, time, space, and matter,—that is, with mathematical and physical science; and with the ME, in the criticism of our own attributes,—that is, with psychological science, or the natural history of mind. In the moral division we are engaged with the ME in the category of *duty*, which is incommensurate with time and space,—that is, the methods of measurement or determination, which we employ in the outward region of the external world, are inapplicable to what we term duty. Duty, if it exist at all, exists as an *absolute*, and aims at perfection. Our moral judgment may, it is true, be obscured and clouded, and we may mistake whether any particular act be or be not an act of duty, just as we may mistake whether any particular line be or be not a straight line; but the conception of duty, like the conception of straightness, is absolute and perfect,—it is either “Yea,” or “Nay,” without gradations or summations of advantages,—it either is or it is not; and as between existence and non-existence there is no gradation, but the mere absolute Yes, or No, so in the matter of duty it is of no immediate importance whether duties be many or few, great or small, well-known or ill-known, the one single question is, “*Is there a duty?*” for if there be, then is the universe a moral universe, and the

whole theory of moral obligation is entailed. Just as if we were given a universe of space, and the question was as to the existence of *matter*,—a grain of sand, or a particle of dust, would entail the whole theory of material existence, quite as absolutely as the solar system, or a thousand solar systems. There would be the question absolute solved in a particular manner,—awaiting inquiry into quality, quantity, relation, and operation.

The question, "Am I responsible?" admits of only one method of solution; the question, "Is MAN responsible?" admits of another. In the first case, when I ask myself, "Am I responsible?" I am engaged with a question of my own consciousness, and my consciousness affirms that *the ought* is a portion of my constitution,—that my freedom has limits which are not merely the limits of impossibility, but limits which I consciously recognise as imperatively to be applied *by myself*, in the exercise of my spontaneous activity. If any man were to affirm that he had *no* such conception, it would be scarcely possible to convey to him its meaning; nor are we too hastily to conclude, that there may not be such an individual, seeing that we know not the amount of deterioration which man may undergo. But that cannot affect us, if *we* have the consciousness of responsibility. If we have the conception of duty, the question is settled so far as we are concerned.

With the race, however, we may use another method. We appeal to history, and to the universal confession of mankind made through institutions,

laws, religions, and rules of action. These, although they cannot *prove* to me that I am responsible, are, at all events, confessions on the part of other men, that they considered themselves lying under the obligations of duty; and so far I have the corroboration of the race, that the moral imperative existing in my own mind, is a universal imperative for the race of man,—for those whom I regard as my peers and equals, and who, so far as their judgment may be of value to me, confirm the deliverance of my intuitive consciousness, that I am responsible. *Their* acknowledgment of a moral law is not the origin of my belief in a moral law; but it greatly removes those difficulties which I should encounter, if none were to acknowledge responsibility except myself.

We may, then, diverge either into the region of morals, which does not implicate space, or into the region of matter, which does not implicate moral responsibility. But we are now in a position essentially different from that which we occupied when we endeavoured to form an induction. In an induction of the external world, we endeavoured to extract the idea of God from the ever-changing phenomena; but now, on the contrary, we begin with a self-existent mind, and carry the idea of this mind into the region of nature. The question then is, “How are we to construe this mind?” for we have two regions, each of which will furnish a method of determination.

The difference between the external world of space, and the internal world of moral responsibility, has

been drawn with consummate skill by Kant, in a passage of surpassing grandeur:—

“Two things there are, which, the oftener and the more steadfastly we consider, fill the mind with an ever new, an ever rising admiration and reverence—the starry heaven above, the moral law within. Of neither am I compelled to seek out the existence, as shrouded in obscurity, or only to surmise the possibility, as beyond the hemisphere of my knowledge. I contemplate both lying clear before me, and connect both immediately with the consciousness of my being. The one departs from the place I occupy in the outer world of sense,—expands beyond the limits of imagination that connection of my being with worlds rising above worlds, and systems blending into systems, and protends it also to the illimitable times of their periodic movement—to its commencement and continuance. The other departs from my invisible self, from my personality, and represents me in a world, truly infinite indeed, but whose infinity is to be fathomed only by the intellect, with which also my connection, unlike the fortuitous relation I stand in to the world of sense, I am compelled to recognise as necessary and universal. In the former, the first view of a countless multitude of worlds annihilates, as it were, my importance as an animal nature, which, after a brief and incomprehensible endowment with the powers of life, is compelled to refund its constituent matter to the planet (itself an atom in the universe) on which it grew. The aspect of the other, on the contrary, elevates

my worth as an intelligence, even to infinitude, and this through my personality, in which the moral law reveals a faculty of life independent of my animal nature—nay, of the whole material world; at least, if it be permitted to infer as much from the regulation of my being, which a conformity with that law exacts,—proposing as it does my moral worth for the absolute end of my activity, conceding no compromise of its imperative to a necessitation of nature, and spurning in its infinity the limits and conditions of my present transitory life.”

We must, therefore, consider how the self-existent mind is to be construed. If we pass at once into the region of objectivity, of quantity, space, and matter, this Mind will become the Great Geometrician, the Great Mechanician, the Great Architect of the universe. Wherever constructive skill is detected in the object, we shall assign *wisdom* to the author; and wherever there is an adaptation of means and circumstances suitable to the requirements of the animated creatures tenanted the earth, we may, so far, assign *goodness*. But still, as I have said before, this external method of determination leads us inevitably to the conclusion, that the Master Mind of nature acts *fatalistically*, by definite and invariable laws, and that, farther than those laws can exhibit the character of the Author of Nature, we cannot enter into the Immortal Presence, but must ever remain in the outer vestibule of creation. We could not know God in the sense of knowing the *person* to whom we are indebted for being,—we could only know the



laws by which God carries on the operations of Nature, and we could have no knowledge whether God did or did not take an interest in our fate, farther than the single fact, that if we obeyed certain laws, we should escape pains that would certainly be incurred if we disobeyed those laws. We should be ever on the outside of the temple of this vast universe, shut out from all communication with the inward sanctuary. We should be only strangers, beholding at a distance the divine arrangements, but never admitted into the presence of that God whom at a distance we ignorantly worshipped.

It is quite otherwise, however, with our moral intuitions, which, if allowed to give forth their utterance, will lead us into the presence of the Eternal,—darkly, vaguely, uncertainly, and obscurely, it is true—but yet, into the divine presence, in a sense far different from that which can be applied to any “seeing of God in his works.” In the works we see not God,—we see only the manifestation of his eternal power and wisdom working fatalistically for given ends and purposes. But in the moral convictions of the soul, God is no object to be sought for and found out, but a present God wherever and whenever we may be. In the works, we ourselves are products created or evolved by the same power that evolves the universe ; but, in the moral intuition, we are persons,—dependent, unknowing, fleeting, hoping, fearing,—but yet, persons standing in the presence of our Maker and Lawgiver, without the mediation of any universe or outward form that can

be construed by the understanding. Not that we are in presence, as if we could *know* God and comprehend his being, but that we are in presence, in the immortal duty of obedience; in presence of the law of our voluntary action, that we may not think nor act in the smallest matter, save only under the subjection of the finite person to the Infinite Person,—the finite ME has found its Infinite correlative. I am no fortuitous creation,—no accident of production in the ever producing world,—no sensitive atom thrown up by Fate, and left to wander many weary hours till Fate arrive again and wind up the chronicle of my existence. I am not this. I am a *person*, a living intelligence and moral agent, made for the service of God, and made to dwell in his presence; darkened and deluded as I am, this is my nature and my destiny, as designed in my creation; God has made me not for the uses of his universe, but for *Himself*; my relation is direct, infinite, and absolute,—the relation of service and obedience from which, so long as I *am*, I cannot escape.

Such is the deliverance of our moral nature, and the conclusion of a moral argument.

The question, then, is, “Am I to construe my conceptions of God according to what I learn from the objective universe, or according to my moral intuition?” It may be said that the two will coincide. To this we reply, that we cannot know whether they will or will not coincide, until we have scrutinised the science of the objective universe,—a long process,—very long, in fact. And, also, the

presumption is, that they will *not* coincide, because one will introduce qualities which the other does not contain. The objective universe is *fatalistic*, and this is in direct antagonism to the very conception of a *moral* ruler, and a moral subject. Objectively I am bound in fate; in my moral aspect I slip from the fetters of my outward captivity, and stand endowed with the freedom of responsibility.

For two reasons, then, we must give the moral idea of God the precedence, and carry the moral idea into the natural world, and not the natural idea into the moral world. This, in fact, is the crucial point of all natural theology, and on the course taken at this period of the argument, depends the conclusion at which any system will arrive. If we go outwardly, we shall conclude God to be the Great Geometrician, the Great Mechanician, the Great Chemist, the Great Physiologist, the Great Political Economist, regulating all by fatalistic laws, and executing all purposes with irrevocable precision. If we go inwardly, we shall conclude God to be the Moral Lawgiver, reigning over a universe of conscious intelligences, and giving *moral* laws to intelligent agents.

In the first place, then, and to allege the first reason, why we are constrained to give supremacy to the moral intuition, we must turn for a moment to the often mooted question of *Idealism*.

*That I am*, is certain. But is it also certain, that there is an external world?

This may be certain, or, at least, certain enough

for all practical purposes; but, assuredly, it is not philosophically certain in the same sense, as that our own existence is certain. I say *philosophically*, because natural theology is only a branch or section of philosophy, and, therefore, every question must be put and answered, not merely in such a manner as to satisfy the ordinary requirements of the multitude, but in such a manner as to meet those philosophical objections which can be originated by subtle heads, ardently striving to discover some new mode in which the universe can be construed.

The doctrine of Idealism—*Absolute* Idealism—means, that every apparent phenomenon (or reality, for it makes no difference which term we employ,) is a phenomenon of our own consciousness, intellection, or *thought*,—that thought is the all, that there is nothing *but* thought, and that all things are thoughts, and nothing more. Whether this doctrine be true or false, it is unquestionably a view which may most legitimately be taken for the purpose of hypothesis. It may, like a hypothesis in physics, be *supposed* true, and then brought to the touchstone of fact. If it would stand uncontradicted by fact,—that is, if it would admit all the facts of our cognition,—then it would hold its ground not as *true*, but as being as good an explanation as any other, supposing that another theory had only equal presumptions in its favour. If it will not square with all the facts, it cannot be true; if it admit all, it *may* be true.

I apprehend, then, that no man can be said to have had the slightest insight into philosophy, who

has not succeeded in conceiving this scheme of absolute Idealism, and of presenting it to his own mind, not merely as a logical proposition, but as a conceived fact. As to the material world, it makes no difference—no possible difference—whether we conceive it as a genuine reality, or only as a permanent phenomenon of thought common to all human intelligences. Supposing the variable phenomena to be *permanent*, and that no man should ever wake out of his dream, it could make no difference in any practical department of human life whether matter were real or ideal, for of its substance we know nothing. The sun may be an older object than any human thought, holding his place before man was, and possibly holding his place after this world shall have undergone some mighty transformation, and man has been forgotten; or the sun may be only a permanent phenomenon of every man's thought, manifesting to the thinking point of intellection a seeming sun, regulated, however, by the intelligible laws of geometry, optics, and mechanics. It makes no conceivable difference. The Arab would still shelter himself under the shadow of the rock,—the navigator would still make his observation of the apparent altitude,—the flower would still welcome the luminary as he journeyed from another tropic,—the waving grain would ripen under his beneficent ray,—summer and winter, day and night, would alternate as they do now.

Let us, then, consider the operation of the ideal philosophy in regard to a moral law. The external

world may be conceived as a phantasm, *without supposing an alteration in man's constitution*. It may be *either* real or ideal, and yet man may remain exactly the same. But not so with the moral law. The moral law of the conscience is part and parcel of man himself, and it cannot be obliterated without supposing a radical change in the very essence of the human consciousness. Grant that the material world is *ideal*, yet man remains unchanged, because the objective universe is apprehended by the understanding, at least in its finite manifestations. But the very nature of a moral law is, that it is *not* apprehended by the understanding, but implanted in the being. It cannot be cast off for a moment, even in thought, without supposing man to be no longer man. We have changed his nature by the very supposition, and converted him into a mere intelligence. We have, in fact, destroyed his essence,—for the essence of a moral mind is the capacity of willing, in accordance to a moral reason; and, if we obliterate this, we destroy what we mean by man, and leave only an intellectual being, distinguished essentially from man by the absence of the moral intuitions.

To man, therefore, under any circumstances, the moral law of the conscience is the nearest, the most imminent, and the most certain of all that can be called knowledge, after the knowledge of our own existence. It is so, logically, though, perhaps, not so chronologically; for the moment the spontaneous activity of mind is supposed to come into operation,

that very moment do we suppose the moral law to act also. All speculations as to how thoughts and feelings arise in the mind of a child (although of great use in the theory of education), are of no importance to philosophy, because they refer only to the chronological sequence of mental occurrences. Many authors, however, writing of the *origin* of our notions, have confounded the chronological with the logical origin, and hence have landed themselves in a system of mere empiricism. These would tell us that *sensation* was the nearest phenomenon to the consciousness of existence,—in fact, that it was the origin of all our thoughts, and the fountain of all our knowledge. And so it is, *chronologically*, just as our material construction is the radical origin of our whole being, and just as our parents are the causes of our life. Such a philosophy, however, is too contemptible to require refutation; it is no more to the purpose, than if a chemist were to inquire into the origin of water, and were told that it came out of the *fountain*. Quite *true*, but of no value to him—of some value, however, to those who wanted water, but did not know where to procure it.

Hence, then, the moral law stands firm *to man* under any or all circumstances of philosophy. The material creation—the world, the sun, the moon, the stars, even space itself, and time, may be only phenomena of conscious thought,—the material universe may be a phantasmagoria,—there may be in reality nothing but *spirit*; yet the moral law stands, and entails with it the consciousness of responsibility.

If I am a spirit finite in my nature, there must be a Spirit infinite in nature ; and if I am bound by the moral imperative of my intuition, that Infinite Spirit must be a moral being—the correlative of the moral law, and the object of my reverence.

But again, let us not confine ourselves to the supposition, that matter *may be* only the spontaneous production of my intellectual activity. We see no reason in the world for supposing that matter has not a real existence, or for supposing that the multitude are wrong when they believe that matter is a real substance. The ideal philosophy explains nothing that cannot be quite as well explained by the admission of the reality of matter. There is, however, good reason for stating the hypothesis, for examining it, for following it into its conclusions, and for giving it all due consideration,—especially for endeavouring to show that neither this hypothesis nor any other can shake the validity of the moral law, or deprive man of his moral nature. We may use it for a purpose as a hypothesis, and having done so (as an intellectual exercise), we lay it past among the theories that have been advanced by the various schools of philosophy. From absolute Materialism up to absolute Idealism, we may have many theories all worthy of examination, and all contributing to throw considerable light on the philosophy of man. All are, *so far*, explanations of *distinct portions* of our being. Materialism is a most true and most important doctrine within a certain limit. So is Mysticism, so is Idealism. Every doctrine, in fact, is a point of



view of man ; and the error is, in supposing that any one doctrine (which starts from homogeneous premises) can by any possibility give an explanation of the whole nature of man. The physician, in treating the mental complaint of melancholy, is a materialist, when he endeavours to relieve dejection by acting on the stomach, liver, or skin ; and we all concur that he *ought* to be so. The dynamist, on the contrary, treating of levers which are inflexible, yet have neither breadth nor thickness, and contain no material, is an absolute idealist ; yet we all agree that he *ought* to be so. All systems, in some department or other, have their uses and their applications, because they are only systems framed for the elucidation of some one particular portion of man's nature. All, in so far as they are true, are good and useful theories ; but each is radically erroneous when advanced as the exclusive explanation which we are to accept by the rejection of every other. We accept each in its own department,—and in its own department alone. Idealism, then, is *one* of these systems,—perhaps the highest and most subtle ; yet, whatever its conclusions, it does not affect the validity of the moral law, nor does it assail, in any reasonable manner, a genuine belief in the moral existence of God. Let each system be confined to its own legitimate province, and it will never be found to impugn the conclusions of theology.

But there is a second consideration. We have asserted that the *moral* idea of God must take precedence of the natural idea, and we have exhibited one

reason for the same, by supposing the possible truth of the ideal philosophy.

Let us now turn to the second reason.

In nature, or seen through nature, God is to some extent one of the *objects* of the universe. All history informs us that there is a powerful tendency in man to *objectify* the idea of God. Hence idolatries and mythologies. Also, in nature we are ever endeavouring to construe to the understanding, to *comprehend*, and, hence, we endeavour to comprehend God as an object. Now, this view is radically erroneous, and contrary to the teaching of the moral dictate. God is not an object of nature, and cannot be comprehended. It may, in fact, be said (liable to misconstruction, however) that God does not exist in the universe, but that the universe exists in God. It is said that space exists *necessarily*, and so it does in this sense, that it is the necessary condition of material existence, and that we cannot think objectively that space should be removed. Space and time are the foundation thoughts of all objective existence or cognition. But the moral idea has nothing to do with space; and though we cannot think space non-existent, we may, with the ideal philosophy, think it only as *thought*,—that is, we may suppose space to have no objective existence whatever, save only in the human cognition; for this, in fact, *is* the ideal philosophy. According to this view, there would be no difficulty in supposing that the heavens might be rolled together as a scroll, and that an entirely new form of existence might be

given to man. Of course, we cannot conceive space obliterated,—that is, as at present constituted, we cannot conceive this; but if the ideal philosophy were true, or if we were to accept it as possible, we should come to this conclusion, that space was necessary to us in our present state, but that there might be some feasible doubts as to whether it had or had not an objective necessity, entirely independent of all other being.

But the *moral* intuition has no reference to any world or being that is objective to us *in space*. God is not objective *in space*, as matter is, because mind, either divine or human, is not commensurable with space, nor has it any reference to extended substance. Mind is the substance of *thought*, consciousness, will, power,—and these are not measurable in space, nor have they any direct relation thereto. That which has relation to space, must either have dimension, or direct relation to that which has dimension, (as the centre of the circle,) but *will* has neither of these qualities, and, consequently, has no relation to space. And hence, even if space were no longer existent in our apprehension, the moral law might remain intact, and the moral theology would still be valid.

Let us, then, consider this point, that God is not an object capable of being comprehended by the reason. We are inhabitants of this world, and this world seems to us great. Yet we know it limited—it is but a planet; and though we cannot transcend it in fact, we can transcend it in thought, and imagine ourselves removed to a distance. Let us

then conceive that we were endowed with the power of passing through space, and that we withdrew to the verge of our solar system. The earth would be an object,—filled with memories it is true,—but now only a small object, that occupied but a point in our mind's estimation. Let us conceive that we withdraw still farther into some far distant region, where the whole solar system was almost lost to gaze,—no bigger than a toy circling in the illimitable expanse. The solar system would then be but a mean and trifling object, its boundaries would be measured in a corner of the eye, it would sink into a nothingless relation to us,—no greater now than was a grain of sand in our terrestrial abode. Let us suppose that we pass still farther into some region of remotest space, where the solar system is long since forgotten, and where the very utmost stars of our present faint detection had been passed far and far, and that we had reached the verge, if verge there be, of the whole material creation. Thousands upon thousands of systems are there before us, gradually sinking into one minute object, which we call the material universe. We are bidding farewell to all things visible, to light and star,—to all things palpable, knowable, or construable by sense or reason. Onward, then, we pass, plunge into the outer darkness, and bid good night to all creation. We are alone in the outer realms of space, no fellow-mortal there, all things have faded like the forgotten vision of our childhood's dream,—we are *alone*.

*Are we alone?* We have passed all things but

ourselves; but are we alone? *We* are there, and with us has come that inward conscience that bespeaks our own dependence, our finity, our responsibility. In passing all things, have we also passed by God, and seen the Almighty fade into an object, like the whole of his stupendous handiwork? Not at all. In all the plenitude of Divine Majesty, God is there. No greater and no less in the lost regions of unutterable darkness, than in the ardent brightness of the sun, or the prolific teeming of the ever-bearing world. God is there above us, beneath us, around us,—God is there in the ineffable fulness of divinity, curtailed in no attribute, shortened in no power, shorn of no glory,—the Infinite Mind dwelling in the plenitude of omnipotence, and only needing to will, that the whole realm around might be lit up with a myriad of glorious systems, or peopled with the hosts of heaven.

God is in no sense an object, and never can be comprehended by the reason. He waxes not nor wanes,—changes not; in him there is no variableness, nor shadow of transforming. He is the All-Perfect, above and beyond all human reason,—the Infinite Author of all that is, or moves, or has a being.

Hence, then, we say from the two preceding considerations, that we must carry our moral idea of God into the natural world, and not the natural idea into the moral world. We must construe the natural world on the plan of our moral intuitions; for only by this course can we arrive at a conclusion that will satisfy our moral nature.

We have now to ask, "What are the requirements of our moral nature?" Our moral nature must have an AUTHOR, and according to the requirements of our moral nature, so must necessarily be (to us) the character of that author.

In the first place, the very existence of moral obligation confirms and corroborates the conclusion at which we had arrived from intuition and metaphysic, namely, that the cause of our mental existence is an *intelligence*.

When we admit the existence of *law* in the natural world, we, in fact, admit no more than a scheme of *constantly recurring fact*, and our own ability rationally to construe the same. Such law does not carry with it the certain and indubitable evidence of an intelligent lawgiver, because we only approach the law from the outside,—and the law itself is an inference.

It is quite otherwise, however, with the moral law, which we approach, not from the outside, but from the inside. In the former case, we know the facts or concrete examples, and from these we infer the general expression or law; but in the latter case, we know the law, and have to investigate its particular application. It is quite possible that the Lawgiver of external nature might have remained an *inscrutable* cause,—that we might never have been able to decide certainly what the character of that cause was; we might, in fact, have doubted, and, perhaps, have remained in uncertainty to the end,—oscillating between an inclination to believe in a personal cause, and a half-acknowledged doubt that *Fate* (that is, an

absolutely inscrutable power) was the origin of all things.

We say, then, that it is quite otherwise with the moral law. This *of necessity* supposes a personal, intelligent, and moral Lawgiver, in the fullest sense in which we can imagine personality. Either there is no moral law whatever, no *duty*, no *crime*, or there is necessarily a moral PERSON, with whom the moral law originates, of whose will it is the expression, and to whom the finite creature must necessarily be responsible. And this, perhaps, is the meaning of the Apostle Paul, when he says, "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves : which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another."

Hence, then, the first requirement of man's moral nature is the *existence of a personal God*. What, in mere intellect, was a *progenitor*,—a mind that must have preceded the existence of human mind,—a shadowy outline, indicating with certainty *something*, but that something all unknown, hidden, and mysterious,—becomes in morals a moral and personal DEITY, whose existence is substantiated by the most imminent of all possible evidence, namely, by the very intuitions of that portion of our nature from which we cannot escape under any circumstances of time or place.

The *moral* argument, that God exists, thus ap-

appears to outweigh all other arguments, and to be the genuine origin of that common belief in a God, which, under some form or other, is present throughout the globe. It is the argument that DOES convince men; for no nation has ever professed a religion based on an inference from nature. It is *not* the external power extended in space that men ever profess to worship; it is a *moral person*, and this even where the conception has been greatly degraded. The Moslem, all fatalist as he is sometimes called, has still a moral deity, who will (he supposes) dispense punishments and rewards; and the very hope of reward incites the Moslem warrior to combat dauntlessly in the field, that he may win the sensual paradise of his sensual hopes. His deity is still a *moral* deity, in this sense, that he will regard the actions of men in this life, and portion out some future destiny, according to a scheme of present conduct—reward to the good, and punishment to the evil. And this very same idea of reward and punishment pervades all religions, more or less, however imperfect, degraded, or degenerated may be the conception of the *nature* of the punishment or reward. In fact, wherever there is a religion at all, there is a *moral* idea at the bottom of it. It is not a *natural*, or merely intellectual idea, and never was derived from external *nature*,—it is a *moral* idea, springing essentially from the very centre of man's spiritual being,—yet, like all else, even like man himself, capable of being degraded down into some vile and corrupted image, which is the last faint symbol



of man's relation to the Almighty. That man's conception of God may degenerate, is no evidence against a theology, it is only evidence that man himself may degenerate, and that in his fall he drags with him all the elements of his spiritual being, and squares his conceptions to suit his nature. Could we, in fact, imagine the sensual savage entertaining the idea of an infinitely holy God? Not at all. Either that theology would tend to elevate the fallen man, or the fallen man would presently degrade the spiritual idea. Hence, all false religion is distinct evidence of two of the greatest truths of the Christian theology,—namely, the moral existence of God, and the fallen nature of man. That religion may be corrupted, is only evidence that man may be corrupted.

The second requirement of man's moral nature is *the moral perfection* of the Divine Being. Nothing less than *perfection* will satisfy the moral nature of man; nor is the corrupt form of actual religion any evidence against this proposition, because we are speaking, not of what man in his fallen condition requires, but of what the moral law in its nature requires—and it is the very nature of a moral law to require perfection. For what, in fact, is the basis of a moral law which supposes obedience to *a person*? It is the perfection of that person. Any thing short of perfection would change the very ground of obedience. If the person to whom obedience is owed were not *perfect*, then the obedience would not be *moral* obedience, it would only be *prudential* obedience; and hence, we find universally, that wherever man has

departed from the conception of infinite holiness, *there* the moral idea has given way to the prudential idea, and God has been *propitiated*,—served, not because it was *right* to serve, but because pains and penalties would be visited by an implacable God on those who did *not* serve.

Any thing short of *perfection* destroys the very nature of morals. If, for instance, God were not infinitely and perfectly *just*, we could not owe him *moral* obedience; if God were not infinitely and perfectly *good*, we could not owe him perfect love; if God were not perfectly *wise*, we should not owe him perfect confidence; if God were not infinitely *powerful*, we should not owe him infinite trust.

There is, in fact, no possibility of conceiving a *moral* law, unless we conceive the infinite perfection of the person who is the object of obedience. The smallest possibility of error on the part of God would cast the whole universe loose from its moral obligation, and would substitute *fear* for *duty*. God claims obedience, from his own infinite perfections; an obedience which man *owes*, not because he will be punished, not because he will be rewarded, but because God is the all in all of the moral universe, and that it is *right* that the finite mortal should give perfect obedience to the infinitely holy Creator.

We cannot escape from this conclusion—either that there is no moral law whatever, or that there is a God infinitely and perfectly just and holy.

Hence, then, we see that although the natural world throws little light on the moral attributes of

God, inasmuch as it does not reach high enough, yet the moral world throws great light on the natural attributes of God. This point is of great importance. We cannot, for instance, owe to God perfect trust and confidence, if God be not infinitely powerful; because nothing less than infinite power can afford us perfect security, and nothing less than perfect security is worthy of perfect trust. Again, if God were not infinitely powerful, there might be another more powerful than he, or as powerful as he, and we should not be bound to obey by perfect moral obligation. Nothing but perfection will save the moral law of man's obligation to God, and this perfection must extend in *every* direction in which we can have thought or being. When, for instance, we turn from the moral world to the natural world, and contemplate space with its orbs and boundless region of suns and stars, we say, "God made every one of them, God rules them, God is their *master*." But how can we say this, with no other evidence than the moral law? Because, if God be *not* their master, then are we not bound to trust God. One of those orbs might come from some far region in space, and crush not us only, but the universal frame-work of the world, and obliterate mankind from being; and if this could take place without the permission of God, then are we not morally bound to trust God, for God might be willing, but not able to protect us. Hence, the moment we admit a moral law,—and a moral law we *must* admit, because it is implanted in our being,—that very moment do we also acknowledge

and proclaim, that God must be the Creator and ruler of the whole natural world, however vast it may be, or however far it may extend.

This consideration removes at once, and *in toto*, all difficulties connected with the origin of the external world, its mechanism, and its fatalistic series of events. The external world, instead of being the universe, sinks into the mere outward framework which God has prepared for his sensitive and moral creatures. The moral universe becomes the essential of existence, while the material sinks into the accidental; not that it thereby sinks into insignificance, for it is God's handiwork, but that it assumes the second place only, and becomes subservient to the purposes of a higher world than itself.

The third requirement of our moral nature, is moral *unity*,—there is but *one* God.

Here it is necessary to draw again the distinction between the natural universe and the moral universe; for men have sometimes attempted, and sometimes still attempt, to reason of things above their comprehension, thereby entangling themselves in heresies, error, or profanations. We know that the Trinity, with its mysterious, but all-important and most vital doctrine, has furnished occasion for many vain disputations, and, probably, for much that had better remained unwritten or unsaid. We know that men have attempted to apply their reason to the doctrine of the Trinity, and to tell us in plain words that three cannot be one, and that one cannot be three, and so forth.

*This whole method is radically erroneous*, and erroneous in this sense—not that the conclusions are either true or false, for of that we know nothing, and pretend to know nothing, but that the whole method is *ab initio* illicit, illegitimate, and inapplicable. With the clearest conviction, we may affirm that the natural reason is *not* applicable to the moral and spiritual world; and we may affirm, also, that many vain and profane reasonings have been made, because men attempted to apply their logical reason to things that are incommensurable with the natural world, and that cannot be construed by reason.\*

Neither do we intend to advance into the region of theology to prove this proposition. It is quite unnecessary to drag the question into the presence of the highest mysteries of the faith. We can

\* On the other hand, all that belongs to the region of objectivity,—all that is cognisable by the natural faculties, is subject to the natural reason. We find this principle universally recognised in Scripture, and with a consistency of logical division that could never have been there had Scripture not been inspired. Our Saviour says, “I and my Father are one,”—a spiritual truth, given on divine authority, and not subject to rational comprehension as to mode. But our Saviour tells Thomas to verify, by his senses and his understanding, the reality of the print of the nails and the wounded side. The Roman doctrine of a transmuted wafer is utterly without a shadow of foundation; it is a grand mistake, sinning as it does against one of the highest principles of philosophy, and against the very criterion to which God has deigned to subject himself. The very brazen serpent was *Nehushtan*. From the beginning of Scripture to the end of it, there is not a single miracle that affords the slightest countenance in its *character* to the doctrine of transubstantiation.

decide the question without such dangerous experiments. We can decide it by reference to human mind.

Let us, then, consider that natural reason has definite provinces, and expresses itself in definite sciences. These are, the mathematical and mixed sciences, the physical, the physiological, and the psychological sciences. All this is the region of natural reason, and here we operate by *methods*. In astronomy, for instance, we operate with the mathematical sciences, as methods, and our conclusions are valid and are confirmed by experience. But neither the mathematical nor the physical sciences are applicable to mind and spirit. True, a mind is conceived as a *unit*, and, so far, arithmetic may be said to apply to mind. But let us try to establish our mind *in space*, and we fail instantly. We cannot link our mind with the external universe, because we cannot assign to it extension. It is not an object in the realm of objective cognition; we cannot measure it, nor even locate it, for it is only our body that we locate. Mind, in fact, is incommensurable with space. Two portions of matter cannot occupy the same space, but with mind it is entirely different; a thousand minds might, for any thing that we can know, occupy the same point,—all that is necessary being distinct consciousness and individuality. The moment we speak of *body*, or *frame*, or *appearance*, or any thing that indicates *extension*, we have left the region of spirit, and entered the outward region of objectivity. Hence, when the schoolmen

asked how many angels could stand on the point of a needle, the answer was, of course, duplex. If the angel had an extended frame, then that frame follows the laws of space; but if the question were how many *minds* could tenant the minutest point that imagination could conceive, then we answer myriads of myriads, because mind to us is utterly incommensurable with extension. But so it is also with *substance*, by which we mean, that noumenon that underlies appreciable quality. In speaking of *persons*, we carry with us too often the idea of substance, as if mind had a substance, and as if two persons must be substantially distinct. Now, if we attach to substance *the objective* idea,—that the substance could be cognisable through its qualities, and that two substances could not occupy the same *space*,—we have departed altogether from the region of mind or spirit, and materialised our conception. Mind is the substance of *thought, will, and power*, and these in themselves (though they may act in space) have no cognisable qualities or dimensions by which we can link them with the objective world. We cannot objectify thought in space,—locate it, measure it, or appreciate it. It is incommensurable with space, and has, in fact, no commensurable relation to the outward world.

Now, the very same principles apply to the *unity* of God. If we endeavour to make God an object, and to assign in any way whatever a substance which could be objectively cognisable, or even imaginable, we have altogether departed from the region of mind

and spirit, and introduced the natural method where the natural method is utterly vicious and illegitimate.

Hence, all questions as to how the doctrine of the Trinity can or cannot be reconciled with our notions of arithmetic, are utterly vain,—being, in fact, perfectly and totally useless and absurd; that is, that the *method* of construing is as totally inapplicable as if we were asked to extract the square root of our own mental existence. Let those who wish for a natural explanation of the Christian mysteries, first give a natural explanation of their own mental existence, and then we may listen to their logic, but not till then.\*

In speaking, therefore, of the *unity* of God, we cannot attempt to talk of substances, or of persons, or to measure the Divine Being in any way whatever as an object, construable by logic, or comprehensible by the understanding. When we speak of *unity*, we speak neither of arithmetical unity nor of substantial identity: we speak of *moral* unity; God is *morally* one.†

\* Human existence is supposed to be *understood* only because it is *familiar*, but it is no more comprehensible than the deepest mystery of religion.

† The Athanasian Creed, when it discourses of Divine *substance*, is wise beyond what is written; for if we have no conception of the substance of the human soul, and do not even find it necessary to suppose a substance (that is, a substance objective in space), how can we dare to pronounce a positive judgment on the Divine substance? We may piously wish to obviate objections, or to explain difficulties; but surely we are not at liberty to intrude the beggarly elements of our human logic into the region of the most sacred mysteries.



By *unity*, therefore, we mean nothing whatever that can be construed into an assertion regarding the substance of the Divine Being,—nothing whatever that can be understood as approaching in any way the doctrine of the Trinity. *That* doctrine we receive, on the faith of God, as one of those things which, being plainly declared, we are to receive and accept as children. With any attempt to explain that doctrine, or to reason regarding it, we have no concern. We renounce, and take care to renounce explicitly, the smallest attempt to speculate in a region which we are surely convinced is above and beyond our reason. Whether the mode of the Divine existence—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—be or be not comprehensible by *any* created intelligence, even the highest of the angelic host, we know not, and cannot know. But we know, certainly, that the mode of the Divine existence is not comprehensible by our limited faculties, and we believe as certainly that God has made known *all* that it is necessary for man to know in his present earthly probation; and thus, though we are bound to read, mark, and learn, we are not bound *to reason*, as if we were to excogitate some truths which God had left in the background; and which, if they were to be discovered by *reasoning* (as mathematical or physical truth may be discovered), would be only open to the man of large ability and logical cultivation—whereas, there is not the slightest ground for supposing that the greatest natural intellect can see farther than the humblest believer into the spiritual mysteries of God.

Nor do we even approach in this place the *scriptural* doctrine that God is One. That is not the meaning. We mean that the moral nature of man points to ONE SUPREME WILL. If there be a moral law in the universe, there is necessarily one Supreme WILL—one INFINITE MAJESTY, to whom all persons and to whom all things are subject. This, in fact, is moral unity, and it in no wise militates against the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

When we say, then, that God is ONE, we mean that there is ONE WILL, absolutely supreme,—that there cannot be two or more *antagonistic* wills of equal authority—that there are not two infinite persons *antagonistic*—that there is not an immortal good and an immortal evil—that the Manichæan doctrine is false, and that God is universal Lord over all.

But moral unity goes much farther than this. It links the whole universe of intelligent and moral being into *one*,—it leaves no discrete moral agents,—it allows no separate mind to be *independent*,—it grants no emancipation from the universal binding together of all created natures that are endowed with the moral element,—it makes man the brother of the angel, and makes the archangel brother to the little child. Moral unity has an absolute centre, and an infinite circumference. All moral beings meet in God. God is the universal centre and the universal circumference,—universal centre, inasmuch as he is present wherever there is a moral intelligence; and universal circumference, inasmuch as he bounds all

moral beings, and folds them within the immortal bands of obligation to himself.

This moral theology is, in fact, *the* theology,—for without a *moral* theology, we might as well be without a theology at all. For what would it advance us to discover in external nature a *fatalistic* power, that wrought its way regardless of man,—scorning alike his hopes and his fears,—bringing him into existence for a small season, and trampling him out again as unworthy of regard,—indifferent to every pang that rends the human heart, and to every aspiration which the human spirit sends forth after the Immortal Good? Where, in fact, in the outward universe is that *heaven*, after which the hopes of man are ever going forth? Is it in the sun? or in the stars? Look at them well and ponder them, and say, if *that* be all the evidence, whether the moral heaven of purity and bliss be not a delusive fable. Look at the outward world and ask yourself, *Where is the habitation of God?* Where is the city with its twelve gates, and the river of life, and the nightless ever, and the light of God's countenance, and the clearing up of all things, and the heart that has found its home at last, and the eye that has forgotten its scalding agonies? Where is He who died on Calvary; who, in the outward form of man, told us of these things, and promised us this heaven,—for, true or false, it is, at all events, historical, that he promised all this? Has the Man of Sorrows also been trodden out by immortal destiny, and is he *nowhere*? Yet *where* is he? Look round on all the

stars, and tell us if you think he is in any one of them, or if they hold out the slightest hope that you will see that Man of Sorrows clothed in the ineffable glory, and reaping the reward of the immortal love of the redeemed.

If we look only outwardly and dwell on the visible creation, are not all these things mere fables? If we were to travel on for ever, and to search through all the universe, should we find God and heaven, and see our departed friends? It *may* be so; but what *evidence* does this outward world afford that it *will* be so? None. The *moral* world, on the other hand, assures us that God is everywhere, and that in a moment—in the twinkling of an eye—all that we now outwardly perceive might be blotted from our apprehension, and that a new creation might be instantly before us,—that we might be transferred, as it were, from this outward world of sense into a world of spirit,—that, in fact, there may be now around us (but unknown) the bright spirits of heaven,—that they might at once become *visible*, and that we might hold converse with them.

That such a supposition is not *contrary* to the teaching of Scripture, is plainly evident from certain indications contained in the sacred writings. We need not say that there is *not* a visible heaven, situated in some magnificent orb, where angelic beings would be apparent to the natural vision, as exercised by man in his present mode of existence. Nor need we say that our own sun, or some still more majestic sphere, does *not* contain the visible habitation of

angels. We need not say this, because we do not know. But we say that we have no outward *evidence* from the objective and external world that it is so. Our moral nature, on the contrary, assures us that God is everywhere present, and that, under all circumstances of time and place, he might make to us any manifestations whatever,—that though we cannot at present, from the form of our constitution, see more than the outward world located in space, yet that we might have our eyes opened to an altogether *different* world, which really exists, yet which we cannot see, because we are under a different dispensation from the inhabitants of that world. We say that there are *indications* in the sacred Scriptures sufficient to prove that this supposition is not at all contrary to the teaching of revelation. When, for instance, Elisha prayed that the eyes of the young man might be opened, that young man *saw*, and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. Now, are we to suppose that those horses and chariots existed only as visions in the imagination of the young man? Are we not rather to suppose that they had quite as *real* an existence as the mountain itself, except only that, belonging to a world different from our natural world, they were not appreciable by ordinary sense, until miraculously assisted for the time by an exercise of the Divine power?

Again, did those horses and chariots *come*, by the ordinary transit of passage through space, from *any* part of our cognisable universe. We have no evi-

dence that such was the case. And that very same occurrence that gave rise to the opening of the eyes of the young man, so that he might see the *other* world, furnishes the example of what is termed the blinding of the Syrians,—meaning thereby, we presume, not such blinding as consists of loss of sight, but such as consists of their not seeing the natural world in such a manner as to recognise the objects according to the common laws of our present constitution.

Again, in that sublime spectacle called the transfiguration, do we suppose that Moses and Elias were not as really there as Peter, James, and John? And that the manifestation of Christ was not, in fact, the real exhibition of the Son of God, whom, in other times, for the great purpose of the incarnation, men saw *divested* of his glory? Are not these things only indications of another world, which has as real an existence as the outward world of space and matter, but which, at present, is hid from our eyes, and *invisible*, except under miraculous assistance from on high?

Hence, then, this moral theology leads us, not to an *abstract Deity* existing always hid, and never manifesting himself except under fatalistic laws, but to a real and personal God, present at all times, and in all places, and who may at any moment open the eyes of man to another world, which most assuredly exists, but which is not cognisable by our present faculties.

That the moral theology is incomparably more

valid and more precise in its teaching, than any inference from external nature ever can be, is a truth distinctly recognised and plainly stated by one of the most profound thinkers that the world has ever seen, namely, Immanuel Kant. We greatly rejoice, therefore, that we can adduce his clear decision as to the view he took, finding it perfectly coincident with the scheme we have endeavoured to evolve. In a case of this nature, Kant is no mean authority, for certainly he was endowed with a peculiar comprehension of intellect, which carried him far above the mere naturalists. Aristotle was a *natural-ist* and a *method-ist*; Bacon, also, was a great method-ist,—but in the true comprehension of the problem of man's philosophy, Kant must be regarded as surpassing both of these incomparably; not that Aristotle can be surpassed in his own department, for both he and Bacon must be looked on as prodigies, but that Kant, disregarding the mere acquisition of natural truth which passes through the senses to the understanding, and thence to the reason, fixed his mind especially on the capacity of man for the evolution of a true philosophy. It matters little whether the mere conclusions he expressed in words be, or be not, strictly correct. His province was to open up such a comprehensive view of man's position, that no mere subtleties of logic could ever afterwards be held to stand in the way of a genuine belief in God. Kant, indeed, is far too little studied, and though his argument requires much elucidation, and his conclusion no small amendment, yet he exhibits so clearly the

utter hopelessness of scepticism, and so completely devastates the cobwebs and sophistries of all arguments and objections springing from the natural reason, that we cannot but attach great value to the deliberate deliverance of so impartial and so gifted a man. The mere naturalist, or the mathematical logician, will recoil from Kant, and vainly imagine that he can detect faults and flaws in his exposition. Granted; but the beauty of Kant's method is, that mere logic cannot touch it,—that he has lifted us into a region, at all events, of possibility, where the mere method of computation (of working from the known to the unknown) is *powerless*; a region which the mere calculator cannot *see*, and, therefore, cannot comprehend, because signs, symbols, and methods, are no longer valid. In fact, of all philosophical works, the “Critik of Pure Reason” most approaches the conception of a spiritual world *above* the world of sense. Kant, it is true, left that world unpeopled, and told us that the speculative reason could teach us nothing certainly, but he quite as confidently assures us, that the existence of the moral law is the perfectly secure basis of a natural theology.

Kant, then, expresses himself as follows:—“Now, this moral theology has a peculiar advantage over the speculative, that it leads infallibly to the conception of a single, all most perfect, and reasonable first Being, whereto speculative theology never, from objective grounds, directs us, and much less could be able to convince us of the same. For we find neither in transcendental nor in natural theology, however far



therein reason may lead us, any sufficient ground for admitting a single being only, whom we presuppose (to account) for all natural causes, and upon whom we had, at the same time, sufficient reason for making all these, in all respects, dependent. On the contrary, if we look from the point of view of moral unity, as a necessary law of the world (or universe), the cause which alone can give to this the adequate effect,—and, consequently, as to ourselves, obligatory force,—it must then be a single supreme WILL that comprehends all these laws within itself. For how could we find, under different wills, perfect unity of ends? This WILL must be *omnipotent*, so that all nature and its relation to morals in this world may be subjected to it,—*omniscient*, so that it may cognise the internal of sentiments and their moral worth,—*omnipresent*, so that it may be ready immediately for all the necessities which the highest optimism demands,—*eternal*, so that at no time this harmony of nature and liberty be wanting.”

Such is the conclusion of the greatest philosopher that the modern world has produced,—that “the GREAT FIRST CAUSE is, necessarily, from the direct teaching of our moral nature, AN INFINITE and MOST PERFECT INTELLIGENCE, to whom all beings and all things are subject” (beings, morally subject; and things, fatalistically or passively subject),—“a SINGLE SUPREME WILL, that is OMNIPOTENT, OMNISCIENT, OMNIPRESENT, and ETERNAL.”

*Conclusion.*—We have now, therefore, to announce our conclusion from the moral world,—that

is, from the moral nature which we know ourselves undoubtedly to possess, and from which we cannot divest ourselves:—

*First.*

We concluded from an induction of the external and objective world, that there must exist A POWER to which we can assign no limits, either in space, in potence, or in constructive skill.

Also, we had the fact of pleasure and pain, of approbation and disapprobation, of justice and injustice, and of punishment and reward in their human exhibition.

*Second.*

We had also the fact, that when we turn from the region of physical nature to the region of moral and social nature, the order and perfection of constant result is lost, and that the social world is a confused, disordered, and discordant region, which presents perpetual imperfection.

*Third.*

We had, therefore, the alternative conclusion, either,—

1. That the CAUSE of the moral world is imperfect in power or in intention; or,

2. That the world was once fair and perfect, man innocent, and rectitude of conduct answering to the perfection of moral dictate; and that some event, some vast catastrophe has occurred, whereby the

primeval harmony has been disordered, and man, from his first estate of innocence, reduced to ignorance, depravity, and corruption.

*Fourth.*

The conclusion from the moral world decides which alternative we must elect. For,—

1. From the consideration of our moral nature we conclude, certainly, that there is an INTELLIGENT GREAT FIRST CAUSE.

2. That this MIND OR PERSON IS ALL-PERFECT, OMNI-PRESENT, OMNISCIENT, OMNIPOTENT, ETERNAL,—perfectly GOOD, perfectly JUST, and perfectly HOLY.

3. That this HOLY BEING is morally ONE, and has no comparable antagonist. That all nature, and all moral beings, are his subjects, and that he is in fact the Supreme Lord and Governor of all things—the DIVINE MAJESTY, GOD OVER ALL.

*Fifth.*

That hence, as we conclude that God is perfect, we must necessarily elect the second member of our alternative,—That *the world* was once fair and perfect, man innocent, and rectitude of conduct answering to the perfection of moral dictate; and that some vast catastrophe has occurred, whereby the primeval harmony has been disordered, and man, from his first estate of innocence, reduced to ignorance, depravity, and corruption.

God is not an object capable of  
being comprehended by the reason

## BOOK V.

### THE INTUITIONAL, OR COMPOSITE ARGUMENT.

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#### CHAPTER II.

##### APPLICATION OF THE MORAL ARGUMENT TO THE EXTERNAL WORLD.

IN applying the moral argument to the external world, the first grand admission that we are compelled to make, and on which the whole course of argumentation depends—on which, in fact, the whole philosophy of man, and the cognisable universe depends—is, that there are TWO WORLDS, the one invisible, and the other visible.

This is the radical fact on which all moral law, all natural theology, and all revealed religion is primarily based. Either matter and space are *the All*, or there is an invisible PERSON, to whom man has relations—as certain, though perhaps not so apparent, as those which he holds to the outward world of sense and experience.

Hence, when we apply the moral conception of God to our reading of the external world, we reverse

entirely the ordinary process of reasoning known by the name of induction. From the external universe we can infer only a fatalistic power, that acts according to fixed laws of absolute determination. The minutest action of the material universe is determined *a priori*,—all is purely mechanical, all is regulated, ordained, and executed with the most perfect precision, according to the qualities of the objects, the universal forces that act on them, and the circumstances in which they are placed. All, in fact, is fatalistic, and subject to fatalistic laws. We do not, therefore, base our theology on an induction from the fatalistic universe; but, on the contrary, carry the idea of an Infinite Moral Person *into* the fatalistic universe, and behold in the operations of Nature, not that which is to furnish *evidence* of God's existence, but that which is to furnish *an illustration of the Divine power and wisdom*. The external world is not, therefore, a region from which we are to draw a dark and uncertain inference, but a region which is itself to be lit up by the moral conception of a perfect God, and to be viewed as flowing from the same Divine hand that implanted in our nature the intuition of moral responsibility.

Man, then, is a denizen of both worlds, and has direct relations to both. Inasmuch as he is an inhabitant of the external world, he is guided by his logical intellect, by his animal desires, by his appetites and passions, by his tastes, impulses, and social affections. He can criticise and analyse the material framework of his astronomic and terrestrial home, and hence he elaborates the material sciences. He

can calculate and compute the results of his own actions, and hence he elaborates political economy and social science. He can speculate with his reason as to the higher causes that operate in the objective world, and hence he elaborates a philosophy more or less correct. The whole of his life may be concisely summed up in two short schemes,—first, *desire*, leading to *action*; or, second, *criticism* and *knowledge*, leading to *action*. These are the two modes in which he acts in the world of his external relations.

In the moral world, however, it is different. The very theory of a moral world forbids the operation of either of these schemes. Neither can *desire* determine action, nor can criticism and knowledge be employed in the same manner as in the external world, where we act according to our own judgment, and regulate our actions according to a conscious perception or expectation of certain specified results. In the moral world, on the contrary, the motive is *obedience*,—obedience to a law whether we can or cannot understand the reason of the law, or whether we can or cannot trace the results of the action. If ever, then, the moral law should come into antagonism with our desires, or should point in an opposite direction to what we suppose to be knowledge, there must arise a question as to which motive must take precedence of the other; in fact, as to *which world* shall have the supremacy,—which world claims the allegiance of man most imperatively,—which world is the essential world, and which the accidental.

We do not, therefore, derive *from* Nature the idea

of a perfect moral Ruler, but we carry *into* nature the idea of an infinite and all-perfect Being.

Now, let us consider the vast difference that this view makes to our reading of the objective universe. In the first place, if we were to consider the material world as furnishing the criterion as to what God is, we should certainly arrive either at Pantheism, or at some dark, inscrutable Fate, ruling all things from some unknowable region, utterly beyond the farthest reach of human discovery. We should be in a perplexed mystery, without a clue to guide us in the unravelling of our nature, or the anticipation of our destiny. We should never know any thing worthy of being known; and, though we might acquire all science, it would only be the knowledge of the outward shell-work of creation,—so that, having known all science, we should be as ignorant as before, and should, in fact, have achieved, not the measurement of the universe, but only the measurement of our own ignorance, and of our own incapacity for such higher knowledge as could instruct us regarding the causes and primordial energies that called the world into being.

But when, on the other hand, we carry the moral idea of an all-perfect God into the realm of objective nature, we call forth the exercise of that vital quality which, more or less, enters into all religions, and which is the cardinal requisite of Christianity—namely, FAITH.

It may, at first sight, appear out of place to introduce *faith* into a system of natural theology; yet it may be shown that faith is really and truly one of

the most necessary principles of such natural theology as does not confine itself merely to barren speculation, but admits also (as all genuine philosophy ought to admit) the ethical element which proposes for its end the direction of the human activity. We say, then, that the moment we admit the existence of *two* worlds, and the supremacy of the moral, invisible, and spiritual, over the natural and visible world, *that* moment do we logically require the element of *faith*, because on no other supposition can we reconcile any real or possible antagonisms that may appear to exist between the moral world and the natural world.

Here, then, is our position. Outwardly we behold the objective universe of space and matter—the astronomic region, which we conceive to be non-limited. In this region we work with our logical reason, and we subject all things to the scrutiny of our intellect. Here the natural reason is supreme, and (except in the *infinitudes*, which are above our intelligible conception) all things are true or false, just as the reason is led to decide after sufficient investigation. In this objective world, all things, so far as human experience has extended, are regulated by *laws*; that is, that with similar materials, similar phenomena will manifest themselves in similar circumstances. There are no *accidents*, no departures from the ordinary recurrence of events; there is, in fact, nothing that indicates any thing but *Fate*. This region is the region of *science*, which has the quality of being the same for all men, wherever they may be



situated; and, consequently, of furnishing for the whole race of mankind a body of truth, which unites the human intelligences in the contemplation of the same general facts, and the same general laws.

On the other hand. Inwardly we are conscious of a *moral* world, which necessarily bears with it the evidence of a Moral Lawgiver, a Divine Spirit, who is to us invisible. Inwardly we are conscious of a moral law, which requires infinite perfection to satisfy it. Inwardly we are assured that there is more in the universe than can be appreciated by the eye or the senses,—that there is, in fact, *another* world, out of which we are, as it were, banished for a season. It is not appreciable to sense, yet we cannot possibly deny its existence without contradicting the very constitution of our own nature and being.

Hence, then, moral perfection being certainly the character of the Author of our moral being,—and moral imperfection (with pain, evil, death, and other things difficult to co-ordinate with the conception of perfect goodness) being certainly the character of man,—*how can we reconcile the outward world with the conception of the perfect moral world?*

To this we answer, “By FAITH,”—by faith in our own *moral* nature, and in the moral *perfection* of God.

Let us make the admission that the moral world is the essential world, and the outward universe only the subsidiary world, and all difficulties as to the goodness of God,—at least, such difficulties as originate in a scrutiny of the outward events that perplex our reason,—fall at once to the ground.

That is, they may still be incapable of solution, they may still appear as mysteries, they may still perplex us in so far as they are at present *insoluble*, but they no longer afford a ground of scepticism or denial of the goodness of God.

We say, therefore, that all *objections* (and they are innumerable),—all *objections* derived from the existence of pain, evil, and death, in the outward world,—which, indeed, would be most real and valid objections, if we had only the *outward* world to depend upon for our knowledge of God;—we say that all such objections are *demolished* the moment we grant the supremacy of the spiritual world over the corporeal. And this, we apprehend, is the meaning of the divine direction: “Fear not them who can kill the body,”—plainly implying, that pain and death are *not* the evils which it behoves man to rank in the first category; and, in fact, that what we call evil—outward evil—may conduce to real *good*; that is, to moral good. That which is evil in the outward and corporeal world may be the discipline of the spirit, and this whole world may be a dispensation of *probation*. And that it *is* so, becomes pre-eminently probable the very moment we admit the existence of a spiritual world. We *know* that it is so, from revelation; but we maintain that, from considerations *independent* of revelation, there is the very highest probability or presumption, that man is undergoing a course of probation in the outward vestibule of the universe, and that, if his eyes were opened to see what the universe actually *does* contain, he might

see an entirely different world, peopled with pure created spirits, who were living in the performance of that moral obedience which is impossible for our fallen race.

How, then, are we to construe the two worlds?

Each world, we know, has laws. The physical universe (and in all probability the psychological universe) is under dynamic regulation,—that is, all its operations are determined by God, according to a schematic system which produces similar phenomena in similar circumstances. That *thought* is subject to laws exactly in the same sense as matter, is no argument against a moral universe, for thought has, of course, a *mechanism* or process, both logical in its analysis and chronological in the fact of its occurrence. The moral world, however, has to do with the *will*; and unless it could be shown that the will was determined on a fatalistic plan, (which, indeed, some have attempted, but which, if true, would obliterate the very idea of *will*,) no theory of the merely intellectual process would affect the doctrine that man was morally responsible, and was to some degree the conscious selector of his own actions.

The moral law is of an entirely different nature from a physical, organic, or psychological law. It is the law of *the ought* addressed to a *will*,—and moral perfection consists in the mind consciously and freely choosing to obey its dictate. Man, we know, is *imperfect*; and imperfect in this sense and from this very fact, that he does not, and cannot, obey the dictate of

his moral nature. He not only does that which he *ought* not, but he does that which he *would* not, and he fails to do that which he would fain do. Of all facts connected with man, this is one of the most indubitable, that one portion of his nature strives against the other portion, and that the *wrong* portion gains too often the mastery. It matters little whether at this part of our argument we call human nature a *fallen* nature, or a *corrupt* nature, or a *disordered* nature, the *name* being of little importance, but it is absolutely certain that there is in man the *fact* of a moral antagonism, and the fact of moral imperfection.

Now, let us consider: on the one hand we have *the temptation*, something which is outwardly good and pleasant; and inwardly, we have the moral law, telling us that it is *not* good. Between these, therefore, there is antagonism, there is war, conflict, and continual strife. Desire on the one hand is alluring, duty on the other is forbidding; if the outward world gain the victory, then has man done wrong; if the inward world gain the victory, then has man so far escaped from doing wrong. But this perpetual strife is fatal to the idea of perfection, for perfection requires that the mind should freely elect the good; and this the human mind certainly does not do, as we are assured by our own consciousness, and by the universal confession of those who are entitled to attention.

We must admit then, fully, and to the utmost extent, that man by his own efforts cannot attain to

moral perfection, that he cannot fully and constantly obey the moral law, even of his own nature, and that morally he is an *imperfect* and *disordered* being.

But, speculatively, even this fact (although it greatly tends to distort the intellectual vision of truth) does not absolutely prevent the reconciliation of the conception of a perfect Moral Governor, with the existence of pain and evil in the outward world; which is the first objection we propose to remove.

Let us clearly fix in our mind that the spiritual world is supreme, that man's spiritual welfare is paramount to his corporeal welfare, and that pain and sorrow (great evils in themselves, if the outward world were the all) may be the very means employed by God to advance the spiritual welfare of the human race, in its present state of probation. We say this *may* be so; it is not necessary to prove distinctly that it *is* so, for the very possibility is sufficient to destroy all that course of argumentation which founds on the occurrences of the outward world.

Let us admit that man is in a state of probation, of discipline, of preparation, of trial, and, in one sense, of *education*. By what *means* was man to be tried, proven, and educated? By presenting on the one hand, and in the outward world, some object of desire, and by forbidding the appropriation of that object, through a moral law. Obedience would continually tend to strengthen the soul of man, and to establish the habitual supremacy of the spiritual world. Disobedience would tend to make the outward world supreme, and to make the soul sink from its spiritual

relationship to God, into an outward relationship to the external world. Supposing, then, that such may have been the case, we can plainly perceive, that pain and evil in the outward world might be employed as the elements of discipline ; for if man had found the outward world all fair, prosperous, and pleasant, he would have been tempted to dwell there, and to shut his eyes as much as possible to the dictates of his moral nature. Pain, in the outward world, may be (and, as a fact, we know it often is) the means of driving man to ponder on his spiritual condition, and to seek for satisfaction elsewhere than in the outward region of sense.

Nor is it at all necessary that this pain should be visited on man in a *specific* form,—that is, that each breach of the moral law should meet at once with a specific punishment, specially intended to declare the disapprobation of God. We have no reason for supposing that such is the dispensation of the present world. The most pious and conscientious men have been subjected to the most cruel trials, while the impious have appeared to pass successfully through life, and to escape with less than an ordinary degree of suffering. Lazarus sits at the gate, while Dives feasts at the table ; but this only proves, that in this world all are placed under a common dispensation, and that, on the other hand, a pious man may be pre-eminently successful, while a wicked man may also be abandoned to the utmost worldly wretchedness. All that is necessary is, that the ordinary constitution of the outward world be such as conduces to the

probation of all parties,—that it should afford a suitable residence for man during his trial,—that its pleasures, and pains, and all its outward events, should be squared upon a plan that tests and tries, but that does not absolutely *punish*, and does not absolutely *reward*.

If, then, we admit that man, in his present state, is in a state of probation, let us ask in what does that probation consist, and by what means can it be effected for the advancement of man's *good*?

It will now be seen (if we thoroughly establish in our own minds the idea that the spiritual world is *supreme*), that the term *good* does not apply to outward prosperity, freedom from pain, or to any worldly success, or worldly advantage. It applies entirely to the development of spiritual good, of godliness in the soul of man,—in the triumph of the spiritual world over the corporeal and external world. The Stoic had hold of a great truth, though he knew not what to make of it.

Probation, then, consists in this, that man should be placed in circumstances where there was a struggle or antagonism between the two worlds,—the outward world presenting, as its supreme good, *gratification*; the inward world presenting, as its supreme good, *obedience*. Now, it is not necessary that in *every* case there should be antagonism between gratification and obedience, but only in *some* case, so that man should be tested as to whether he would or would not admit the supremacy of the moral law. This would be *probation*, proof, trial, the testing of

the will, the verification of the true and genuine nature of the individual, the experimental process by which should be determined the essential character of man. For this purpose there must necessarily be a law on the one hand, and a proposed qualification on the other, which the law forbade ; for only by this means could it be fairly tested, whether man would adhere to the moral unity of the universe by obedience to God, or whether he would endeavour to establish an independent will of his own, by presuming to indulge in the forbidden gratification.

By what means, then, could this probation be effected for the advancement of man's spiritual good? We reply, by the exercise of FAITH. Without *faith* there could be no successful probation—faith being that quality that would tend to keep the spiritual world present to the mind, and to counter-balance the desire of gratification, by the perpetual suggestion of the *higher good*.

Faith, then, belongs, really and truly, to natural theology, and its province is to keep the moral attributes of God present to the mind under *all* circumstances of moral temptation, or intellectual difficulty. When we experience pain, in our outward frame or in our trembling heart, what can assure us that God is infinitely *good*? *Faith*. When we are immersed in difficulties which we cannot explain ; when we cannot understand the reason of events, or the construction of the world, and would fain believe, from outward evidence, that God is not wise, good, and merciful, —what can relieve us from our painful doubts, and



convince us certainly that we are but limited and erring mortals, and that we must not oppose our partial reading of the universe against the assurance of God's moral perfection? Nothing but *faith*. The outward world is to the inward world only a *seeming*,—it may *seem* imperfect, or it may seem partial in its distribution, or it may seem inconsistent with itself, or it may seem incompatible with the divine perfections, or it may rack and torture us with intellectual difficulties, with temptations to believe in Pantheism, or in Fate, or with the stupendous wretchedness of belief that God cares not for man, and has thrown him for ever out of his presence, heedless what becomes of him, of his hopes, his fears, or his affections. All this the outward world may do, and it may bring us through fiery trials of outward condition, or still as fiery trials of mental conflict and spiritual agony. What, then, can afford us inward support and inward consolation,—nay, more, inward assurance and firm conviction? It is *faith*,—faith in our moral intuitions, and faith in the perfections of God.

The outward world may seem what it will; but so long as our moral nature stands, and so long as we have faith in God, then so long is God the ALL-PERFECT and the INFINITELY GOOD, and in a moment he may transfer us from the outward world of probation into the spiritual world of essential being,—out of the world where we see as through a glass darkly, into the world where we should see face to face.

Pains, troubles, trials, intellectual difficulties, in-

scrutable events, and all the outward phenomena of the world, are not, therefore, any evidence whatever against the moral perfection of God. They are only evidence *that man is in a state of probation*; and that it matters not how much we may suffer in our experience of life, or how much we may be perplexed in our endeavour intellectually to construe the universe, provided the spiritual discipline has been achieved, and the soul of man has emerged from its probationary experience, confirmed in obedience, and strengthened in its moral powers, energies, and affections.

In taking this view of faith, however, it must be remembered, that faith is here spoken of in its utmost generality, as that faith which might have been common to Socrates the philosopher and Stephen the martyr—as faith in a perfect Lawgiver, who has implanted in man a moral nature, and subjected him to a moral law. We have not yet arrived at a specific faith; we have, as yet, only its generic form in its most general operation. We have not yet what has been termed (correctly enough) a *positive religion*. We have only the abstract elements of a positive religion, just as when we have mathematical science, we have the abstract elements of physical science. We are still wandering in the dark as to *who* God is, and what are the specific rules which he wishes us to obey. We have all the form of religion, but none of its material; all the theory, but none of the specific facts which can transform that theory into an operative rule of life. We have

the moral law in its general imperative, but not in its specific precept. We know that we ought to obey the moral law, but we do not as yet know its specific commandments. We do not know the actions which it enjoins, nor the actions which it forbids. We know it only in the general proposition, that *if* we knew its commandments, then those commandments would be imperative. We know that it is valid, and ought to be obeyed; but the particular manner of obedience we do not know, until we shall have received specific communication from the Author of our being.

Hence, then, it is (from these considerations) pre-eminently probable, that there *should be* such a communication. So far, indeed, from revelation being *improbable*, it is so very probable, that without it there would be a distinct vacancy in the scheme of knowledge. There would be a universal preparation for it, and yet that itself should be wanting. There would be all the abstract form of a religion, but none of its real matter. There would be man, constructed in every point for the fulfilment of duty, for obedience to God, and for reverence of the Most High, and yet altogether at sea as to what *was* duty, ignorant as to *who* was God, and reverencing an *unknown* person. Such a supposition, so far from being *probable*, is utterly absurd,—it has nothing whatever to commend it, no parallel in the whole history of the world, no analogy with any thing we know, and no resemblance to any thing whatever that falls within the limit of our experience. We say, then, that so

far from a revelation being *improbable*, it is the very requisite that reason points out as necessary to complete the scheme of human belief. Reason, in fact, terminates at the very proposition,—“Look for a revelation.” Reason says, “I have prepared the way for the specific knowledge of God, by showing you that such knowledge is the main want of humanity, and that without it you can know nothing that is worth knowing,—look for a revelation.” Such is the very province of reason, not to teach us a religion, not to tell us *who* God is, not to inform us as to our specific relations to God, and our specific duties to God, but to tell us that there is a God, and that his will is supreme, and ought universally to be obeyed. Hence, then, reason points directly and immediately to revelation; not that reason is incomplete, or its teaching insufficient, for this would be a fatal supposition, but that the *province* of reason (let it even be *perfect* reason) is only of that general nature, that it requires specific revelation to complete it. So far as it goes, reason is a most valid and trustworthy instructor; but its province is *not* to instruct us in religion, only to instruct us in those general forms that *admit* a true religion, and point out its absolute necessity. Reason furnishes the scheme, revelation furnishes the fact and the doctrine; and we are no more to decry reason, because it does not teach us the specific facts and precepts of a positive religion, than we are to decry mathematics, because they do not teach us the specific facts and laws of the physical creation.

Hence, then, we say that when we carry the conclusions derived from our moral nature into the external and objective world, we carry with us also a high probability, that if we search we shall find a *revelation* from the Divine Being. This revelation, if, indeed, there be one, would entirely supersede all inductions from the external world, and it would supply the concrete facts and precepts necessary to complete the abstract teachings of a moral theology.

Having thus indicated the method by which we remove all the moral difficulties connected with the conception of a perfect God reigning supreme in the spiritual world on the one hand, and an external world of pain, sorrow, disease, and death, on the other hand; we might now proceed to the consideration of revelation. But as the object is not so much to remove the moral difficulties that have to do with the conduct, as the speculative difficulties that have to do with the belief, and to exhibit the genuine conclusions of a natural theology elaborated in its various departments, we shall still offer a few observations on the conciliation of the knowledge and belief derived from external nature, with the convictions derived from moral intuition.

When we say, "a natural theology elaborated in its various departments," we do not mean that any such theology has yet been achieved, or even that at this age of the world, with science only half completed, it is capable of achievement, because man has not yet scrutinised all the departments of research that are capable of enlightening him. The natural

history of society has yet to be much more fully investigated, and moral science has still to assume a form and certitude, which will place it in a very different position from that which it at present occupies. We mean that we may take up *every* department, and approximate by a general method the probable conclusion which it *would* furnish, were each department completed. This method is quite legitimate, because a small advance in any science is sufficient to indicate in general terms the *theological* conclusion it is destined to furnish.

How, then, do we remove the sum total of the difficulties connected with the external world,—a world in which the wicked are often prosperous, while the righteous are trodden under foot.

*First*, Either there is no moral law whatever, no moral obligation, no duty, no crime, no conscience, and no religion; or, there is *another* world (we need not say a *future*, but *another* world), invisible to the eye of man.

*Second*, Either the moral dictate implanted in the soul of man is entirely fallacious; or, God is perfectly just and holy.

*Third*, In this world, we do not observe any regular execution of *moral* justice; that is, the events of the world are *not* squared on a plan of equal distribution, equal retribution, and equal reward.

*Fourth*, Either, then, God is *not* just, or there remains some *other* dispensation of punishment and reward, fairly proportioned to the requirements of each individual case.

*Fifth*, Hence the events of this world are not to be taken as the *final* operations of God.

*Sixth*, But if this world be not, as regards man, the final dispensation, two consequences arise,—first, that this life is transitory and probationary; second, that there must remain for man a future world, in which justice shall be infallibly executed, according to the most perfect rule of right.

*Seventh*, But if this world be a world of probation, then must it contain *antagonisms*, for only on the supposition of antagonisms can we conceive probation.

*Eighth*, These antagonisms, therefore, so far from being inexplicable in the reason of their existence (their final cause), are the very circumstances that *constitute* the probation; and hence, the very appearances of their inexplicability, or the doubts they throw over the perfect goodness and justice of God, *are themselves a portion of the probation to which man is subject.*

*Ninth*, Hence, under all circumstances of human life, of human trial, of human doubt, and human difficulty, it is requisite that man should exercise *faith*, because faith is the element that will bring man through his probation, and cause him to maintain in his own mind the habitual presence of the spiritual and unseen world.

*Tenth*, But as man himself, by the universal acknowledgment of all religions, and of all human consciousness, is incapable of fulfilling what even he establishes as a perfect moral law; and as he is thereby

for ever excluded from the possibility of *a successful* probation, *either* man is without hope, lost, ruined, and undone, and absolutely excluded from that world of moral perfection and bliss to which his moral nature necessarily directs his reason; or, there must remain some means of redemption and restoration, which has not its origin with man but with GOD.

Such, then, may be presented as a fair and impartial conclusion. Man's moral corruption, and the antithesis of the two worlds, are as certain and as well-established facts as any fact with which man is acquainted. We have now, therefore, to inquire whether there is any solution of this master-difficulty; whether God has deigned to enlighten man on the major problem of human philosophy; and, above all, whether God has provided man with means by which he can achieve a successful probation, and at last be translated into the world of spiritual purity and bliss.

We shall now, therefore, sum up the whole conclusion of a natural theology, and determine the position in which the Reason leaves us when we approach the question of Revelation.

#### GENERAL CONCLUSION.

##### THEOLOGY.

1. The universe in which man dwells is duplex,—first, the natural universe, which is cognisable by the senses, the understanding, and the reason; and, second, the spiritual or supernatural universe, which is incognisable by the senses and the understanding,



but necessarily recognised in its existence by the moral faculties and the higher reason.

2. There is (not *in* the universe as being contained in *space*, but there is universally) AN INFINITE PERSON, who is the author of all else that exists as substantial being.

3. In the natural universe, *space* and *time* are the primordial necessities of thought, of which we cannot divest ourselves by any possibility. They are conceived, the first as infinite in all directions, and the second as without a beginning and without an end.

4. In the spiritual universe space and time are non-necessary, and, consequently, space and time *may be*, for any thing we can certainly know, only the primordial *forms* of terrestrial thought.\*

5. Be this as it may, however, and whether we do or do not admit the reality of material substance (a

\* It is, therefore, *possible* that space and time, like all *limited* existence, may be entirely dependent on the creating PERSON, and that space and time might be obliterated from the human apprehension, although we cannot conceive the *mode* of thought that would prevail were space and time removed. That there may exist *consciousness* without the conception of space and time, is proven by certain mental states and conditions superinduced by the action of certain medicines, and, consequently, man might remain in such condition for a longer or shorter time, as, for instance, *after death*. The conceptions, space and time, are not absolutely requisite to consciousness, but only requisite to the exercise of the intellect in man's present form of existence. Space and time, therefore, are to be ranked as the pre-requisites of the *natural* universe, but they are not to be ranked as the pre-requisites of the spiritual universe, inasmuch as *mind* is *incommensurable* with space. We must admit, then, that though we cannot conceive the absence of space, and though space be the first re-

question which seems to be incapable of philosophical solution, inasmuch as *either* hypothesis might be incapable of refutation, had we no other means of knowledge than the exercise of our intellect), we must necessarily admit—that the universe contains, or rather is coincident with, an INFINITE PERSON, who is (in the natural universe)

OMNIPRESENT,  
OMNISCIENT,  
OMNIPOTENT,  
ETERNAL,—

that he is the universal CREATOR and CAUSE of all things, ordering all things by his wisdom, and ruling all things by his power,—that without him no being could be possible.

6. In the moral universe God is the ALL-PERFECT. In the natural universe, God is the Infinite in *extension*; in the moral universe, God is the infinite in *intension*,—in breadth of existence, perfect; and in depth of nature, perfect.

Thus, in the moral universe, God is

Perfect in knowledge,  
Perfect in wisdom,  
Perfect in power,  
Perfect in truth,  
Perfect in justice,  
Perfect in goodness,

Perfectly holy, and perfectly claiming as his right

quisite for the existence of the natural world, yet that there exists a universe *other* than the universe of space, a world in which the units of being (minds) have no sensible or conceivable dimension.

the perfect obedience, confidence, love, and service of all created beings.

7. God is morally ONE. There is *one* Supreme Will.

Such are the conclusions of a speculative theology. To complete the scheme of man's intellectual requirements, we must have the elements of a practical theology, and introduce what we have learnt of *man*, that we may thereby establish the relation between the Divine Creator and the human creature.

#### ANTHROPOLOGY.

1. Man is a sensational, intelligent, rational, and moral being,—

Limited in space ;  
 Having a beginning in time ;  
 Partial in knowledge ;  
 Partial in power ;  
 Not self-existent ;  
 Dependent for being ;  
 The creature of God.

2. Man is

Imperfect in knowledge,  
 Imperfect in wisdom,  
 Imperfect in power,  
 Imperfect in truth,  
 Imperfect in justice,  
 Imperfect in goodness ;

an imperfect and incapable being, owing perfect obedience, confidence, love, and service to God.

3. Inasmuch as man does *not* render perfect obedience to God, man is a *guilty* being.

4. That inasmuch as God could not have created man imperfect, and *incapable* of obeying the moral law to which he was to be subject, man cannot now be in the original condition of his creation.

5. That there must have occurred some great moral catastrophe, whereby present man has inherited a nature that will not and cannot obey the perfect moral dictate.

6. That inasmuch as perfect justice is *not* executed in this world, man is in a state of suspended condemnation; and there is, therefore, a high presumption that man must have a *future* existence, in which punishments and rewards shall be dealt out on some principle which is *not* in operation in this world.

7. That inasmuch as man is now placed (and, from the constitution of the world, appears always to have been placed) in the predicament of having an object of desire on the one hand, and a moral restriction on the other, man is in a state of *probation*,—of proof, trial, and testing of the will.

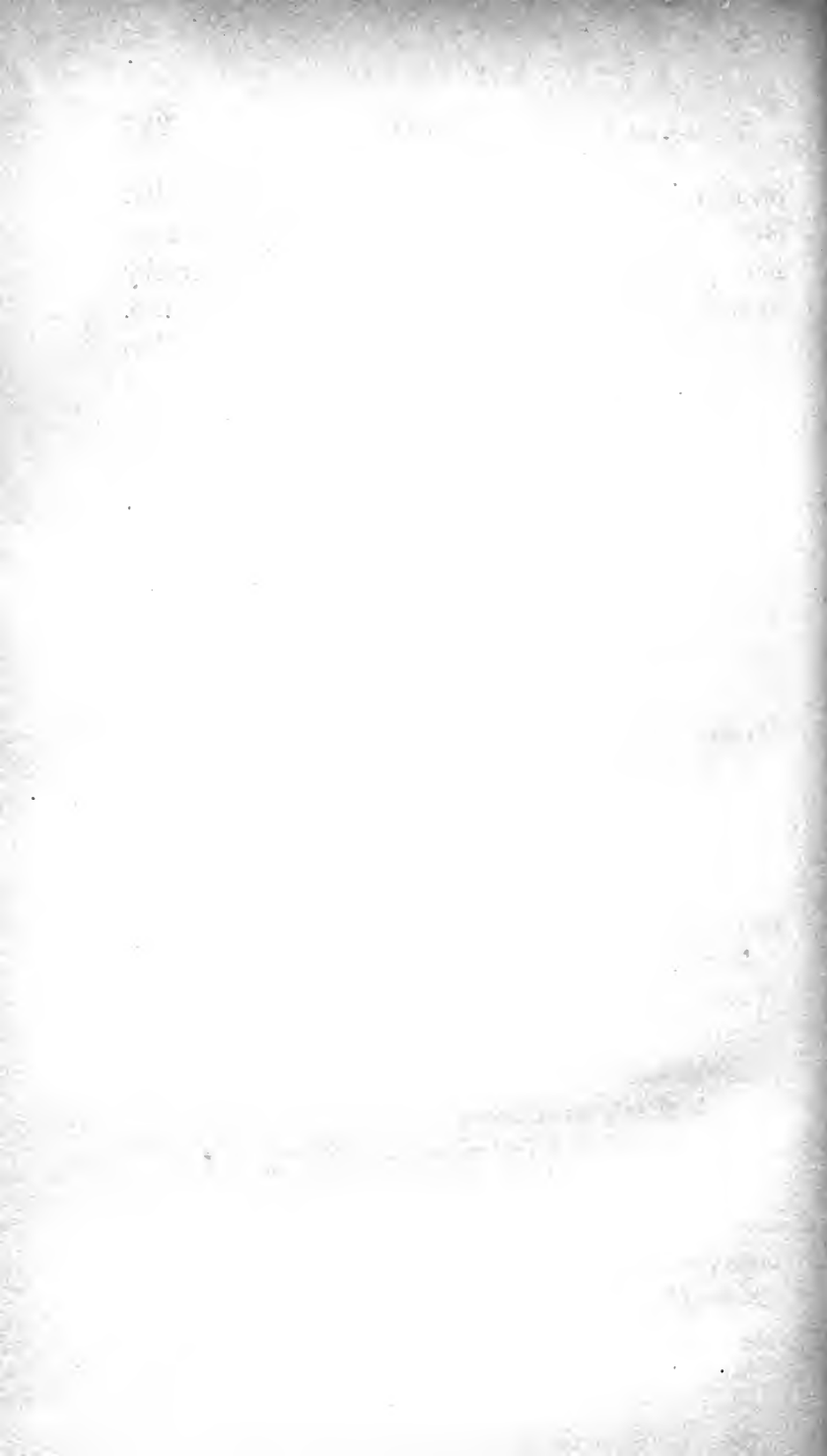
8. That the achievement of a successful probation—inasmuch as man *cannot* obey the moral law of his nature—is a hopeless impossibility, if man be left to the exercise of his own energies alone.

9. That, under any circumstances, the only means by which any man could have achieved a successful probation, is FAITH.

10. That inasmuch as judgment is not executed

on man in this world, it seems highly probable that God may not have cast man off utterly, but may have provided some means of restoration, whereby man should still attain to the capacity of obedience.

11. That, hence, it is also probable that God has given *a revelation* to mankind.



BOOK VI.



REVELATION.





## BOOK VI.

### REVELATION.

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§ 1. *Revelation a Solution of a Problem.*—We now come to the operation of the first principle with which we started, namely, that a theological argument must necessarily assume the form of a demonstration or of a solution,—the demonstration of a theorem, or the solution of a problem.

All that has hitherto been advanced, is merely the statement of the conditions of a great problem, of which Revelation must furnish the solution. We do not arrogate the belief, that we have advanced a *demonstration* of the moral existence of God, as if the Infinite Wisdom needed aid and assistance from finite and erring powers. By no means; in all that has been stated, we have continually borne in mind that God himself has spoken, and that it behoves man only to scrutinise the conditions of such prior belief as might exist without the divine communication. We have endeavoured to lay bare the requirements which a Revelation must fulfil, and to determine with some small precision the necessities of belief which, as it

were, precede and await the Divine instruction. But we have not endeavoured (and thought not of endeavouring) to supersede the need of Revelation, or to substitute a vague and general notion for an imminent and vital truth.

We affirm, then, that all natural theology is no more than the specification of the conditions of Revelation,—that if there were *no* Revelation, reason would not be practically worthy of regard further than that it might hold out a vague and dim hope that God might still dispense a ray of divine light to illumine the obscure darkness, and dispel the mystic superstitions that gather around the heart, when exposed unaided to the contemplation of the great problem of the universe. Nay, we may say more,—we may affirm that natural theology, in a correct form, is only possible *after the reception and study of Revelation*; for it is Revelation alone that clears up the master-difficulties, and thereby enables us clearly to perceive the elements of the problem that *has* been solved.

It is, therefore, no objection to natural theology, that it could not be elaborated by the heathen. Of course it could not. If, however, we could find a heathen, or rather a man, of large intellect, and *without moral bias or prepossession*,—without any bias of *tradition* or *authority*, and perfectly *impartial*,—then *that* man could, in all probability, elaborate some such theology as is here advanced. Such a man, however, cannot be found; and, consequently, there never has existed on the face of the earth any one man who was in a position to elaborate a natural

theology,—fairly to discover, weigh, and estimate the theological conclusion that the sum total of human cognition actually does contain. It is only after man's reason has been set free by Revelation, that man is able to reflect on the whole phenomenon, and to see, not how much he *has* learnt from nature, but how much he *might have* learnt. The logical value is precisely the same in both cases,—that is, a natural theology, whether arrived at in the onward course of investigation, or arrived at through the solution which Revelation has afforded of the great problem of the universe, is equally conclusive, provided it be really and truly a genuine natural theology. It matters not how we were able to arrive at the scheme, provided the scheme be logically unobjectionable; its value is the same whether it be an acquisition or a *gift*,—and we conceive that a true and tolerably complete natural theology is really one of the gifts conferred by Revelation—that God, in solving the great problem for man, has also given him the means of the highest intellectual exercise, and furnished him with a theme which will always afford fitting occupation for the highest genius of man.

This is the position. Revelation has *solved* the question. Now, *accept* Revelation, and then go into the field of Nature, and build up logically, step by step, such a natural theology as you can elaborate by the ordinary process of analysis, synthesis, and analogy. On the one hand, you must not infringe the laws of logic; on the other, you must arrive at

a conclusion compatible with Revelation. If in your process you have sinned against logic, then your conclusion is *illegitimate*; if your conclusion does not coincide with Revelation, then your scheme is *erroneous*, either in its premises or in its process.

If you have made an error in your process, then you must recalculate; if you do not arrive at the required conclusion, then you must pull your scheme to pieces, and re-investigate the whole. Revelation is, in fact, the *criterion* of natural theology; and the genuine problem of natural theology is to discover a system *that shall have natural premises* (admitted or unobjectionable),—*that shall involve no logical error in its process,—and that shall arrive at a conclusion compatible with the essential doctrines of the Bible.* If we discover such a system (even although it should have been entirely originated by our study of Revelation), then we have a genuine natural theology, that nothing can overturn.

We must, therefore, determine the light in which we propose to regard Revelation. By Revelation is meant, of course, the sum of truth contained in the Old and New Testaments,—in fact, THE BIBLE, which is a concise and convenient name for the whole scheme of history, philosophy, ethics, and religion, contained in those inspired writings, which convey to us a knowledge of THE TRUE GOD.

The Bible may be used for various purposes. First, for its essential purpose,—the exhibition of the plan of *redemption*; second, for the solution of the great problem of the universe; third, for its historical

teaching; fourth, for its philology; fifth, for its prudential precept as applicable to this world; sixth, for its prophetic anticipation of this world's future history; and so forth.

All of these purposes are *legitimate*. We may study the Bible in many different modes, and for many different purposes. In this place, however, we use it entirely and exclusively as affording the solution of the major problem of the universe; and to place our view clearly and apparently before the apprehension of the student of natural theology, we shall use a double syllogism, and show, in the most concise manner, the elements of two courses of argumentation. First, then, we say,—

1. Whatever affords a solution of the major problem of the universe is divine :\*

The Bible affords a solution of the major problem of the universe :

Therefore, the Bible is divine.

And, second, we say,—

2. Whatever scheme comes from God, and teaches man the facts and principles of the true religion, will contain a solution of the major problem of the universe :

\* The major problem of the universe is the substantiation of real existence objective to, and independent of, our own thoughts and consciousness,—the determination of an existence that would still exist were all finite mind and thought obliterated. The argument is, that revelation is *subjective in its evidences*,—*objective in the matter of its truth*; and, if so, it affords the only *possible* solution of the problem.

The Bible comes from God, and teaches man the facts and principles of the true religion :

Consequently, the Bible contains a solution of the major problem of the universe.

We have purposely presented these two syllogisms together, because they form a circle ; and it may even be said, that the two taken together present an instance of reasoning in a circle.

To this we reply, that *every problem with its solution* forms, *when* solved, a circle. The very circumstance, that the solution is found, enables us to reason from either side of the equation ; whereas, if we were to reason only from the one side, we should reason from the known to the unknown, and should proceed upon the principle of *discovery*. When the solution of a problem is found, we proceed no longer on the principle of discovery, but of demonstrable correlation ; and when we have the *whole* truth, we may indifferently prove either that the conditions of the problem lead to the conditions of the solution, or that the conditions of the solution lead to the conditions of the problem. Thus, the divinity of the Bible leads us to anticipate that it will afford a solution of the grand problem that has baffled all human intellect ; and, on the other hand, a complete solution of the philosophic difficulty is in itself sufficient proof that such solution must be of divine origin. When nature and reason propose the *question*, and when a scheme (professing to come from God) actually furnishes a full and sufficient *answer*, then we say, without hesitation, that we must believe in the divinity of

that scheme, even if it were substantiated by no other evidence ; we know that there *is* other evidence, and perfectly sufficient evidence ; but any man, giving a fair, impartial, and candid consideration to the two terms,—namely, the conditions of the question, and the answer furnished by the Bible,—must logically dismiss all intellectual *doubt* as to the divine origin of the Christian scheme. This seems, indeed, to be the strongest of all possible evidence that addresses itself to the mere intellect, because it is *perpetual* and *universal* ; and though this peculiar kind of evidence has met with less elaborate exposition than other kinds, we conceive that *it*, and it *mainly*, is the true reason why the Christian missionary may fearlessly expound the Christian doctrine to any human audience, without adducing the smallest evidence that the Bible came from God. He need not trouble himself with external evidences ; yet, in every country under the sun, and among all tribes of men, he may confidently expect that the bare *suitability* of the gospel to the great intellectual and moral requirements of man, will convince at least *some* that the Christian scheme is of divine, and not of human origin. If the Bible, instead of being authenticated in every possible way, had been found by a far-sailing navigator on some barren rock in the midst of the ocean ;—and if the work of redemption, instead of being finished on Calvary, had been wrought out in some distant island that had long since sunk beneath the waves, and left no record save that contained in the new-found book,—the evidence of the divinity of that Bible would have been

perfectly sufficient,—and it might have been accepted for this reason, and for this reason alone, that the Bible scheme is the only thing in the world that even approaches to a solution of the intellectual and moral difficulties which have baffled all the intellects, and all the researches, and all the philosophies, and all the false religions, and all the agonising cries for knowledge, that have ever prevailed on the surface of our globe.

Hence, then, we regard the Bible as furnishing *the solution* of those intellectual and moral difficulties which present themselves to our reason when we carefully scrutinise nature and man. We need not say that every possible question is solved, but every question which it behoves man to know in his present state, and every question which required to be solved to enable man to achieve his probation. The moment we admit a Revelation, we must admit that God would make it *suitable* to man's necessities.

§ 2. *The conditions fulfilled by Revelation.*—We have now, then, to enter on a criticism of Scripture, and to determine the conditions which a Revelation must fulfil.

These we must divide into the philosophical and the moral.

First, then, the master-difficulty of philosophy is *the substantiation of objective truth*.

This objective truth may be expressed by many names. It may be called the knowledge of Essences and Causes,—the knowledge of the Infinite and the Absolute,—the knowledge of the Noumenon, as dis-



tinguished from the knowledge of the Phenomenon, —the knowledge of Reality, as distinguished from the knowledge of Appearance,—the knowledge of what *is*, as distinguished from what *seems*; and so forth. The same idea lies lurking in all these expressions.

When philosophers not only disregard Revelation, but evidently pursue an erroneous method, it is neither surprising that they should arrive at an erroneous conclusion, nor that their conclusions should be altogether rejected by the mass of mankind. When they assure us that all our knowledge is relative, subjective, or phenomenal, we must regard their statement as merely an imperfect reading of the laws of thought; for this reason, that not only does the world refuse to believe it, but that the philosophers never succeed in believing it themselves. The common sense, or, as it should rather be termed, the common *reason* of mankind, and even of the philosophers themselves, rejects the theory of an unknowable external world. All *may* be thought, but there is no evidence that any man has yet succeeded in convincing himself that his own thoughts are *the All*.

In every question of this kind, the first, and most important proceeding (and the one almost always forgotten by philosophers), is to determine the *possible* modes by which the question could be solved. It is, for instance, utterly vain to argue concerning *the immortality of the soul*, unless we first determine how the question *could possibly* be decided. What evidence could *possibly* be sufficient to convince us that the

soul is immortal? It is plain that no *presumption* founded upon a finite experience could ever be sufficient. There might be a presumption in favour of a *future* existence, but a future is not necessarily an *endless* existence. Now, what evidence *could* be sufficient? Suppose even an angel, who has existed myriads of ages,—how could that Being *possibly* know that he should not go out of existence? His past life (however great the time, provided it had a commencement) is incommensurable with infinity, and cannot afford a certainty that he shall always continue to exist. What evidence, then, is possible? There is, in the whole universe, only one possible evidence—namely, a *Revelation from an Infinite Being*. Opinions of philosophers, therefore, are mere presumptions—because the *only* evidence that could be satisfactory, is a Revelation from Infinite Knowledge. The whole question, then, resolves itself into this, “Is there, or is there not, a Revelation?”

And so it is in this great question of objectivity or subjectivity. Philosophers have forgotten to ask, “What evidence could *possibly* be satisfactory?”—and until they ask this question, and answer it, their speculations (highly important as they are, for the elucidation of the intellectual powers and processes) are merely learned trifling. That is,—for *secular* purposes, their speculations are of great value;—for mental education, for the instruction of the reason, for the development of that acuteness that leads to accuracy of thought and statement, for the general exercise of the logical and rational faculties—these

speculations are admirable. But *theologically*, these speculations are matters of indifference; because, though speculation be admirable as an exercise, yet the amount of truth which it could achieve under any circumstances, must be totally insufficient to satisfy the whole requirements of man.

What *possible* means, then, could *any* created being have, of arriving at objective truth? Let the intellect be as great as it may—angelic—far beyond all human intellect—must not the knowledge be merely relative to the mind that knows? How could even an angel be sure that his knowledge was not phenomenal, ideal, subjective? Can we conceive any possible intellect (of a finite and created nature) being perfectly certain that the universe was *not* merely the phenomenon of *thought*? However great the intellect, the knowledge must be relative to the knowing mind, when that mind acquires its knowledge only by its own exertion. Were it shut out from communication with the Infinite and Divine Being, we do not say that it *could* not arrive at objective truth, but we do say, most emphatically, that man cannot possibly conceive how it *should* arrive at objective truth, and be certain that it had arrived at the substratum of the universe. Neither do we here contradict what has been previously said with regard to *force* (Book I. Chap. II. Sec. II.), in the “argument from science, that man can know *causes*.” When the sceptical philosophy affirms that we cannot attain to a knowledge of causes, it is a sufficient refutation of that system to adduce the use of *force* in dynamic

science ; because force is at once positive and supersensible. But though we destroy the sceptical theory, and substantiate a *noumenon*, we have only lifted the question into a higher and more remote region, and never could be sure that our conclusions were absolutely veracious, if left merely to the exercise of our own intelligence.

Hence, in the whole universe, there is only one possible mode by which a finite creature can arrive at a knowledge of absolute truth,—namely, by a Revelation from the infinite God. And hence, also, Revelation solves the master-difficulty of philosophy, and actually places the Christian upon *higher* ground than any philosopher has ever attained.

It may now be asked, however, *how* a finite being, who cannot attain to objective truth, can be sure that the Revelation comes from God? To this we answer, *By ascertaining whether the person making the Revelation be entitled to infinite confidence.* The whole matter is summed up in this, — “Is the person making the Revelation entitled to the absolute confidence of our whole being?” We cannot go farther than this, for this is, to us, absolute. If, for instance, our Saviour were entitled only to such a degree of confidence as might arise from the exhibition of marvels and miracles, then that would not claim the whole confidence of man, because no merely intellectual conviction can satisfy man’s moral nature. These things may be taken and accepted as *indications* of a superior power, but they must be combined with a moral purpose and moral scheme that enlists

*man's whole being.* And when man's whole being, intellect, heart, and soul, combine to give unlimited confidence, or to assure him that notwithstanding the weakness and frailty of his nature, he *ought* to give unlimited confidence, then can he go no farther, but must say, "This is the true God, I resign my whole being for ever and for ever into his hand and keeping."

Thus, a Revelation may truly solve the great difficulty of philosophy, by being *subjective in its evidences and objective in the matter of its truth.*

We say, then, that Revelation is subjective in its evidences, and objective in the matter of its truth; and this consideration shows where (in the matter of Revelation) reason may be legitimately exercised, and where it may *not* be exercised. All the evidences are subjected to our reason, and God has made man judge of them, claiming acknowledgment only after proof. But the *matter* of Revelation is not thus subjected to reason; it contains *mysteries*,—glorious mysteries, it is true, but still mysteries,—things beyond the province of reason, things that are to be believed on the testimony of God, who has first established his own truthfulness, and then given to man a knowledge of things to which man could never have attained. Nor is this method in the least unreasonable, or contrary to the analogy of nature, where the child believes the parent, not because he understands all that the parent teaches, but because he knows that his parent is worthy of confidence, and will not deceive him. Those who rush into the mysteries of the faith,

and pretend that they are not credible, because they are not comprehensible, depart entirely from every rule of method, inasmuch as they forget that what is subjected to their reason is not the matter of the faith, but the evidence of the Revelation; and if they will perversely endeavour to construe that which never was intended to be construed, we need not wonder that they fall into errors and unbelief,—errors and unbelief, caused not by any insufficiency in the Revelation or its evidences, but by the tortuous and disingenuous mind which they have brought to bear on the subject. “If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they believe if one rose from the dead.”

Hence, then, Revelation solves once and for all that mighty question that has so much perplexed the philosophical world. But *how* does it solve it?

In purely natural theology, we arrived at the fact, that there must necessarily be a Divine Person. We say we arrived at the *fact*, but we did not arrive at the knowledge of the PERSON. Like an orphan in the present world, we were absolutely certain that we must have had a progenitor, a parent, but *who* the parent was we could not know. Revelation, then, *gives us the knowledge of the Person*,—“I am the Lord thy God.”

And now, we find an entirely new object for the operation of *faith*. In natural theology we had faith in our moral nature, faith in the spiritual world, faith in the supremacy of the spiritual world, and faith in the perfection of God. But now our faith is transposed from faith in our subjective intuitions,

to faith in the *object* of our intuitions. It is no longer faith in our own moral nature, but faith in God himself. We have found the Divine Person, not by our own research, but by his revelation of himself; and thus there is the completion of the two terms,—the finite and dependent creature relying upon the Infinite Creator.

It will now be said, that this is not a genuine solution, because *faith* is not *reason*, and philosophy professes only to reason.

But we reply, that faith *is* reason, and the very highest form of reason. If by reason we mean the mere comprehending intellect, then faith is not *that* reason, and *that* reason will never attain to the knowledge of the Infinite. It needs no philosopher to tell us, that we shall never be able to comprehend God as we comprehend the finite exhibitions of matter, or the finite phenomena of human existence. The logical reason is a mere mechanism, a tool, a thing to work with,—a thing in the hands of the soul, to do the soul's work, when it contemplates the forms of the finite, and rationally elaborates science. But *that* reason is not the highest reason, nor is it competent to act when the soul, brought into the presence of its Maker, operates, not from the process of analysis, synthesis, and computation, but from the spontaneous and spiritual motive that involves the whole being of man. *That* is the higher reason; and in this sense, faith is not only rational, but the *most* rational operation that the soul can perform. Faith is the very essence of reason,—the very quintessence

of man's rational being,—so high above mere logic, that it casts the arts of computation to the winds, and rushes at once to the object of its aspiration. Faith, in this sense, is like *sight*,—it brings us into the very presence of God, and makes man believe God with a belief that ought to be as infinite as the imperative of moral obligation. To say that faith is not reason, is as if we were to say that reason is not sensational appreciation,—a truth which only marks the superiority of reason over sense. Reason is the highest form of sense, and faith is the highest form of reason,—each operating in different regions of existence, but each operating on the universal principle of correlation *between the faculty and its object*.

Hence, then, when God makes himself known, the problem is solved, and solved to the perfect satisfaction of the higher reason. There remains, and there can remain, nothing else to solve. Of course, there may still remain (in extension) an infinite knowledge *to acquire*, but, in intension, the problem is absolutely solved; because, if we may use the expression (and with reverence), faith is the union of the finite creature to the Infinite Creator. All creation is then seen as springing from God,—and God becomes man's HEAVENLY FATHER.

We say, therefore, that Revelation solves perfectly the great mystery of the universe, and we have now to ask *what* solution God has given of man's present condition.

§ 3. In thus endeavouring to scrutinise the solution furnished by Scripture, of what may be termed the *terrestrial problem*, we confine the argument to



some of the essential doctrines contained in the inspired books.

First, then, it is to be noted that the Bible does not furnish, and never pretends to furnish, a complete and logical exposition of the proofs of the divine existence. Revelation is, therefore, *presentative*, not *representative*. When God has deigned to speak or to reveal, the Revelation is of the most imminent character, affording the very highest degree of possible certitude,—the certitude of *presence*, not the certitude of *inference*. We have the *record* of the Revelations; but those who received the Revelations had the certitude of immediate communication, and, therefore, they had the highest proof that could possibly be afforded.

God, in the full plenitude of majesty, has spoken to man, as man, *three times*. These communications have been made at long intervals, in different circumstances, and, seemingly, for different purposes.

The first revelation may be termed, *The prohibition*.

The second, *The rule of life*.

The third, *The way of salvation*.

In this order and arrangement, there is a logical connection that astonishes us at once with its simplicity and its completeness. The first was, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, *thou shalt not eat of it*."

The second was given many centuries later,—it was THE DECALOGUE.

The third was at the transfiguration,—“ This is my beloved Son, *hear him.*”

These, if we mistake not, are the only occasions on which God has spoken, in the plenitude of authority, to *man*,—not to man as placed under this or that dispensation, or in this or that accidental circumstance, (accidental in its *logical* sense,) but to man as the finite creature generalised throughout the world, and receiving from the Creator the divine law for the guidance of his life.

In these three divine commands, we have the most concise summary which can possibly be presented of the whole of the Bible scheme. The very fact, that these commands were given in the circumstances recorded in the Bible, is in itself a distinct proof of the divinity of the Bible. That human intelligence originated the circumstances described, and the three laws to which we have referred, is so totally and hopelessly absurd, that we might believe any thing whatever, if we believed that this record did not come from God. The very highest efforts of human literature bear to this divine record about the same relation that an orrery does to the firmament ; and we might as soon believe that man made the heavens and the earth, as we might believe that the three events were of human origin. God *must* have been there.

§ 4. First, then, we shall speak of *the prohibition.*

Either the whole of human nature is an utter delusion, or there must have been a *Paradise*. Man *must* have been created innocent ; and for this reason. We know that there are such things, such a thing as

love, and hope, and poetry, and aspiration, and the dream of perfection. All the spontaneous sentiments of the soul point to innocence as the *only* condition that can satisfy our moral judgment. Now, we have this alternative. We may believe that our whole nature is a perfect *mockery*,—that some demon produced us for the purpose of satanic recreation,—that he made us for some diabolic gratification of his scorn and ridicule,—that he threw us into existence with the aspiration of immortal purity in our soul, and the necessity of impurity in our nature,—that all our hopes are lies, and our imaginings of good only dreams which were given by some malignant spirit,—that we might pass our life in torture, and end it in the agony of disappointment.

Or we may believe, on the other hand, that our dreams of innocence are the shattered remnants of a fallen nature,—that there *was* a state of innocence,—that God *is* true,—that all poetry represents some lost reality,—and that our nature, like the broken lyre, has only ceased to discourse its heavenly music, because *sin* has swept its chords with a deadly hand, and left us only the wreck of our immortal heritage.

Human nature, in fact, has no meaning, if man were not once innocent. Honour, virtue, love, innocence, purity, hope, and freedom, would all be mythical,—superstitious unrealities, which we ought to sweep away for ever from our scientific age,—for they represent nothing that exists, and nothing that we have any experience of. There must have been a time of innocence, or man could never have *con-*

*ceived* it,—there must have been a Paradise, or man never could have imagined the garden of Eden,—there must have been an Eve, or the whole of our present poetic nature is a perfect lie and imposition. There must have been a Paradise, or there could not now be a moral law pointing to innocence as the model of perfection.

But we are told that man has been *developed*—that he has grown out of the lower animals, or out of some low, degraded savage. This doctrine (which appears to have more adherents than we could expect, did we not remember that those who reject Revelation are the most romantically credulous on all other matters),—this doctrine is said to be scientifically preposterous, by those sober investigators who cultivate *knowledge* as distinguished from *empirical pretension*. On the scientific question we do not intend to speak, but of this we are perfectly assured, that the theory of development is impossible *in literature*. If man were developed out of some brute, or even out of some wandering savage, how does it happen that the very oldest literature in the world should contain the very highest conception of human life,—that the very oldest book in the world (for we suppose it will scarcely be contested, that the five books printed at the beginning of our Bibles, and the Book of Job, are the very oldest of all extant literature,) should contain a picture which no modern and no *other* book has ever even approached? Every literary man in the world must perceive, upon a moment's reflection, that what is termed *development*

is absolutely impossible in literature. If, indeed, we found a Bushman, or an Australian savage, producing the majestic Book of Genesis, our faith might so far be shaken ; but when we find the savage universally confining his attention to matters of physical interest, degrading superstition, or the rags of tradition, we must, as *literary* men, scout this doctrine of development as a vain and conceited confusion—the confusion of an analogy with a literal fact. It is quite true that there is an *analogy* between the gradual formation of an individual animal, and the gradual development of forms in the specific arrangement of the whole animal kingdom. This is quite true, and a rabid guesser might guess that the lower animal grew gradually into the higher. But a fatal fact is ever in the way of this theory of development. The whole realm of animated nature does not contain one *transitional* form. True, the egg changes into the fowl or the reptile, but *the specific difference* is universally preserved, and *no* instance can be adduced in which there is the slightest evidence of a change transforming one species into another. The whole theory originates entirely in confounding an *analogy* with a *fact*. The development of an individual animal is *analogous* to the gradual increase of complexity observed in the classification of the animal kingdom, but no transitional form of one species into another has ever been discovered ; and the whole theory of development is without one single fact on which to base its preposterous scepticism.

But there is another fact, which is apt to be over-

looked. It matters not *how* man was produced. So long as he is a *moral being* endowed with a moral will, it matters not whether he were made out of an ape or out of the dust of the ground. Of what consequence is it whether the material substance that forms his body were or were not arranged into a previous organism? It is mere matter after all,—mere carbon, earthy salts, and gases, with traces of metals. Does this make any difference to the nature and destiny of the immortal spirit that inhabits the tenement? Does any fact whatever connected with the corporeal residence of the soul unhinge our moral convictions, and cast us loose from the bands of religion? Man is man, not because he is formed in this manner or in that, but because God has breathed into his mortal frame the breath of life, and endowed him with a spiritual existence, that entails with it the highest responsibilities.

A paradise, a condition of primeval innocence, a state of probation, and a *fall*, are absolutely requisite before we can explain any thing connected with man. Without these, philosophy would lead us only to a hopeless mystery; we should know absolutely nothing, and never should be able to attain to knowledge, for all the science that has ever been evolved does not advance man a single step in the explanation of his moral nature and moral condition. No man who has rejected these four particulars has ever been able to advance an explanation possessing even the most remote claims to acceptance. They, and they only, solve the perplexing question of human

existence,—of man endowed with the conception of the virtues, yet constantly practising the opposite evils.

Scripture, then, informs us that man was originally created pure and innocent,—that he was placed in circumstances of happiness,—that he had direct communication with God,—that to him was appointed a probation,—that he was tempted,—that he fell, and in his fall entailed with him his race. And hence the origin of all the wickedness, violence, and sin that have prevailed throughout the world; and which spring not from ignorance merely, but from an evil and corrupt nature. Knowledge (as mere intellection) is an accident, a corrupt nature is an inherent character of our essential being.

As this dissertation proposes only a logical inquiry into what the Bible *does* teach, and the conciliation of this doctrine with the conditions of the terrestrial problem, we shall not dwell on the picture of man's early existence in the garden of Eden. But, surely, there is no human heart that can remain untouched at the contemplation of that fairest scene that ever broke on the imagination of mankind? The poetic feeling of our nature (and the poetic feeling, to whatever uses turned, is of heavenly origin, and possibly was given to man to clothe all things with loveliness) may dwell with unlimited satisfaction on the beauty of that unmarred world, where innocence walked hand in hand with love, and where the very thought of sorrow was as yet unknown. It is gone, but not gone for ever; the Book that opens with the

vision of the earthly paradise, closes with the vision of the heavenly home, where God shall wipe all tears from the eyes of his children, and where sin and sorrow shall be seen no more.

We have said, in our conclusion from Natural Theology, that man, placed on the earth, must be in a state of probation; and Scripture perfectly confirms and explains that conclusion. Man *was* in a state of probation, he was created into a state of probation,—it was his condition by nature, the condition appointed for him when God called him into existence. The probation consisted in his having an object of desire on the one hand, and a law, forbidding his appropriation of the object, on the other. It was not, as we previously concluded, a moral law derived from the intuitions, forbidding something which the senses or appetites desired, but which the moral intuitions would not sanction. It was a *positive and specific* law, applied to a positive and specific action, which, without the law, might, perhaps, have been indifferent. The permanent or immutable morality did not consist in doing, or not doing, this particular action, but in rendering, or not rendering, *obedience to God*. Hence, this first portion of Revelation exhibits\* another principle at which we previously arrived, namely, the *supremacy* of God. God's will is absolute, and demands rightfully the

\* We say *exhibits*, not *proves*, as the Bible does not pretend to prove. It makes an *exhibition* of truth, and the proof is contained in the exhibition. There are no *doubts* in the Bible, except on the part of man.



most perfect and consummate obedience; for this universal obedience to the one Supreme will, is that which constitutes the harmony of the moral universe,—not that the term *absolute* has any relation to what we term tyranny or despotism (which is the reign of human and finite will), but that God, being *infinite* in all perfections, it is at once a matter of right, and a matter of the highest reason, that his will *should* be supreme. If we make God an *object*, or reason of these things as if God were not the very fountain of the universe itself,—the Infinite Person by whom all things consist,—then we fall into a *false* notion regarding the supremacy of the Divine will, and are apt to suppose it *oppressive*; whereas, if we duly consider that moral harmony can only be attained by universal obedience, and that all sin is really and truly disobedience to the law of God, God being *infinitely* wise and good, we shall see that all such thoughts are only the dark misgivings of our own fallen nature, and that God infinitely *merits* obedience,—if we may use the term *merits* to express that which the Divine Being not only desires, but *infinitely deserves as due*. Of course, we, as *fallen* creatures, repine and rebel against God; but that is not the question, the question is, Whether, in the judgment of our reason, a divine and infinitely perfect Being is *entitled* to absolute obedience from his *creatures*; for if *not*, then what rule could *possibly* be established or even conceived?

We say, then, that God is supreme, not merely in power but in right; it is God's right to receive obe-

dience, as it is man's duty to render obedience ; but not only *man's* duty, it is the duty of every possible creature that ever existed, or ever *can* exist. God is *the All*, and on God all things are dependent.

But not only do we learn the assertion of God's supremacy, and the fact that man was placed in a state of probation, we learn that vital fact which is the key to all human history, namely, *the fall of man*.

Unless we admit the fall, the whole of past history, of present fact, and of possible philosophy, becomes altogether *inexplicable*. We cannot reason a single step concerning man, unless we admit this moral catastrophe. It may be difficult to reconcile our present notions with the scriptural doctrine, that the disobedience of our representative father should entail on all his descendants a fallen nature. But of the *fact* there can be no reasonable doubt—because we cannot conceive a morally perfect God creating man such as he is at present ; and we have the distinct assertion of Scripture, that Adam's transgression was the fall—not of Adam as an individual—but of Adam as *man*. God placed *man* in a state of probation, and *man* transgressed against God. Thenceforth all men born into the world by natural generation partook of Adam's transgression. It may be *difficult* to reconcile this with our reason, it may even be *impossible* to reconcile it (on this we pronounce no judgment), but most assuredly it is the *fact*, and we shall hereafter have to point out a *correlative fact*, which is the counterpart of the fall. If there be no fall, there is, in fact, no Revelation whatever, for the

whole of the Bible scheme hinges on the fall; and if there be no fall, the Bible is a mere myth, of no more value than a story-book.

The *fall*, then,—which consisted in the fact of man's disobedience to God, and the consequences of that disobedience,—is the great moral catastrophe which throws the first gleam of light on the philosophy of man. It is the origin (the logical origin, not the origin *in time*, for as with God there can be no contingency, so must we necessarily suppose all His purposes to be eternally foreordained),—we say the fall is the origin of that wonderful scheme, which is afterwards exhibited in the development of the Christology.

After the fall, the Bible scheme begins immediately to change its character, at first with the shadowy announcement of a plan of *mercy*, to be wrought out by some mysterious personage, whose real character and lineage are only faintly surmised; but growing gradually more precise through consecutive revelations, symbolic instructions, and prophetic anticipations, until at last the mighty advent had arrived, and the SON OF GOD appeared on earth as the MAN OF SORROWS.

We must, therefore, distinguish in the Bible doctrine that which is *Theology* and that which is *Christology*. This distinction we can make without entering into any of those vain disputations concerning the persons of the Trinity, which proceed upon a hidden assumption, that we can make this mighty mystery more intelligible by the application of our logical

reason. We renounce every thing of the kind. We do not attempt to reason for one single moment concerning the persons of the Trinity, or the relation that Christ bears to Him whom he calls Father. It is a *mystery*; and even if it be *capable* of being understood by the human intelligence, we must accept it as an *intentional* mystery, satisfied that the form of Revelation is divine as well as its Maker, and that God had given exactly such a revelation as is best suited to the wants of the human race.

We say, therefore, that we must distinguish between what the Bible teaches as *theology*, and what the Bible teaches as *christology*. [This term is not much used in this country, but it is unobjectionable, as it is analogous with *theology*, and expresses the theoretic scheme of Christianity, whereas the term *Christianity* is more frequently applied to the moral scheme.] Hence, when we pass onward from the fall of man, we find a double course of Revelation, the Revelation of God and of the law of perfect rectitude, and the Revelation of Jesus Christ and of his Gospel of glad tidings.

§ 5. The second Revelation to which we have referred, was a *theological* revelation. It consisted of the DECALOGUE. The Decalogue was given *twice*, and perhaps we may discover some remarkable instruction conveyed even under that circumstance, which appears in Scripture as a mere narration. *Why* was the Decalogue given twice? We may suggest a reason for this fact, not dependent on the anger of Moses, or the idolatry of the children of Israel, but a reason that

links itself immediately with the whole scheme of Revelation. Man had fallen, he had lost the image of his Maker, and a nation had been selected to exhibit by its terrestrial career the allegory of that scheme by which man passes from the bondage and servitude of sin into the promised land of God's free gift.

In choosing Abram and his descendants, God exhibits that supreme right of election which is taught from the beginning of Scripture to the end of it. Election by God is one of those vital facts which run through the whole of Scripture, teaching us that both in the world of nature and in the world of grace, there is a Providence that overlooks the world, and directs what is termed the destiny of man. This Providence is sometimes confounded with the doctrine of *miracles*; but miracles,—that is, departures from the ordinary laws of nature in *the objective world of matter*,—are not in the slightest degree required to establish the doctrine of a special providence. God, in his infinite foresight, may have constructed the laws of the world on such a plan, that every operation of those laws should work *pecially* as well as *generally*; and also, God may so determine the volitions of the mind at certain times, and in certain circumstances, that a real providence is achieved, even without our knowing it, quite as much as if God had stayed the sun in the heavens, or caused the waters of the sea to divide. Miracles are in no respect necessary to the doctrine of providence.

Why, then, was the Decalogue given twice? We cannot suppose that God, who had designed the

whole career of the Israelites with so minute a particularity, allowed so remarkable a circumstance to take place without some symbolic meaning or moral purpose being cognisable in the outward event.

Attaching, as we do, great significance to the fact that God has spoken to man, *as man*, only these three times, we offer what appears to be the explanation of the breaking of the tables. There is perhaps a very high meaning in this occurrence. Man had fallen, and had become incapable of rendering perfect obedience to God. But God could not abate or diminish his perfect law. That which was *right* was right under all circumstances, and whether man were innocent or guilty, capable or incapable, the law must be proclaimed and justified, whatever the consequences to man.

What, then, was the first giving of the Decalogue? and what was the second giving of the Decalogue? We shall observe a very remarkable difference in many of the particulars. [Read the 19th and 20th chapters of Exodus, and the 5th chapter of Deuteronomy, &c.]

We have said that the only laws which God has given to man, as man, and in the plenitude of Divine Majesty, are *The Prohibition*, *The Decalogue*, and *The Injunction to hear the Son of God*.

We refer exclusively to the *first* giving of the Decalogue.

The first giving of the Decalogue was distinguished from the second by these particulars—

1. It was spoken by God himself,

2. In the plenitude of power,
3. To the whole assembled people ;
4. It was written with the finger of God on tables of stone ;

5. It was *the only* part of the law spoken by God to the people. "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice ; and he added no more : and he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me."

The Decalogue, therefore, in its first publication, is essentially distinguished from what is termed the *Mosaic* law. Moses was not the means of communication between God and man when the Decalogue was *first* given. The Decalogue is thus entirely independent of Moses. It was given by God to the whole assembled multitude, with signs, and wonders, and evidences ; it had no *mediator*, none standing between the Almighty as the immortal Lawgiver, and man as the recipient of the law,—Moses himself was sent down to stand among the people ; and Moses himself received the law at its *first* promulgation, merely as one of God's human creatures, standing with his fellows in the presence of the Infinite Lawgiver. Any assertion, that the *Mosaic law* is abrogated, does not affect the Decalogue. Such assertions have been made as if they did include the Decalogue,—but they only betray a careless and indifferent reading of Scripture, which does not usually terminate in any thing calculated to benefit

mankind—much more especially when they weaken the validity of that beneficent institution, which, one day in seven, relieves man from toil, and makes him remember that God is a God of *mercy*.

The second giving of the Decalogue was entirely *Mosaic*. The first tables were “the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.”

The second giving of the Decalogue was,—

1. Through Moses.

2. Moses hewed the tables.

3. God gave no commands, but gave the *record or repetition* of the former law, “I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest.”

4. It had a mediator,—Moses being the medium of communication between God and man.

5. The Decalogue was here given in connection with a large body of other law and precept.

6. It was accompanied by a revelation of *mercy*, whereas the first giving spoke only of *obedience*: “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, *forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin*, and that will by no means clear the guilty.”—(Exodus xxxiv. 6.) This is an apparent contradiction, but it is one of those contradictions which in Scripture contain the very highest possible truths. At the first giving of the Decalogue there was not a hint of *forgiveness*.

How, then, are we to construe the remarkable fact,



that the Decalogue was given twice, under such very different circumstances,—that the one was given without a mediator, and that the other was given through a mediator?

This, then, appears to be the explanation. The first Decalogue was *a covenant of works* ;\* the second was *a rule of life*, annexed to *a covenant of mercy*.

The first involved the idea of justification,—of non-culpability,—of freedom from the condemnation of God for actual transgression,—*provided* any man had kept the whole law perfectly. “This do, and thou shalt live,” seems to have been the meaning of the first Decalogue ; but then, man was a *fallen* being, and *could not* observe the law in any sense of meritorious observance.

The second Decalogue, on the contrary, had nothing whatever to do with justification. It did not involve the idea of merit,—it was not a covenant of works,—it was *a rule of life*. Man required to know *how* he was to live, even under a covenant of mercy, just as he still requires to know how he is to live

\* By a *covenant of works*, it is not meant that the first decalogue was *actually* a covenant of works, but that it was so in its *nature*. If this were all that God required from man, then man would have been free had he fulfilled all ; and *this* consideration constitutes the decalogue a covenant of works. In the covenant of *mercy*, however, the theory of the whole matter forbids the very idea of man fulfilling *all*. A covenant of mercy, and a covenant of grace, are based on the very fact that man *cannot* fulfil all ; and that God, out of his infinite mercy, has provided some *other* means for the fulfilment of the law that could not be relaxed in its requirements.

under the gospel. And the Decalogue was the gracious Revelation of the perfect rule of life, of inestimable value to mankind, but of no avail for the justification of man with God.

Consequently, as by the works of the law no flesh living shall be justified, the first tables—that is, the divine law of righteousness and the covenant of works—were first promulgated, as of necessity they must have been; and they were then *broken*, showing, by this most significant expression, that God had destroyed the covenant of works, because it was incapable of application to man. For the covenant of works God substitutes a covenant of mercy; and then the precepts, or commandments, which were incapable of effecting the justification of man in the sight of God, were *reproduced* as the universal rules of life for the universal guidance of mankind.

The Decalogue, therefore, must be carefully distinguished from the *Mosaic* law. The Mosaic dispensation was a dispensation of mercy,—of anticipative atonement,—of foreshadows,—of offerings, sacrifices, purifications, types, and symbols, all having reference to a future manifestation of Christ. The moral law remained imperative, and the Decalogue was the moral rule of life, the infringement of which constituted sin, in contradistinction to the breach of the ceremonial law, which constituted uncleanness; and as uncleanness was to be washed away by ceremonial purification, so was sin to be forgiven through faith in that promised Redeemer, who was *to fulfil the law*, and to offer himself a sacrifice for sin.

Hence, we conclude, that the Decalogue is a law of universal *obligation*, although in no respect a means of *justification*. It ever remains the law that *ought* to be obeyed, under one single reservation, namely, that God in a subsequent Revelation of divine command, said in the fulness of authority, "This is my beloved Son, *hear him*." If Christ taught that the Decalogue was abrogated as a rule of life (for surely he taught that it was not a means of salvation), then the Decalogue would be superseded on God's own authority ; but if Christ did *not* teach that the Decalogue was abrogated, then the Decalogue remains a permanent body of divine command, which is universally obligatory on the whole of the human race,—not that it forms a portion of what may be peculiarly termed the christology, seeing that Christianity has to do with the *redemption* of man, but that it remains the permanent rule which would have been in operation, whether man had or had not fallen. True, had man *not* fallen, there might have been no need to give the Decalogue as a system of law specifically enacted, but it would have been *in operation*,—that is, it would have been *the rule of life*, even for unfallen creatures, and would have been *exhibited* in the actual conduct of Adam's descendants. But whether this be true or not, the great point of our argument is, that the abrogation or non-abrogation of the Mosaic law does not affect the first giving of the Decalogue, and that God, by telling man to hear his Son, placed the whole matter in the hands of Christ. In fact, we may connect

the two last revelations, the Decalogue and the Injunction, in this manner, "I am the Lord thy God: Thou shalt have none other gods before me. This is my beloved Son, hear him." For, in fact, the latter command may be termed the *eleventh* commandment, seeing that it was given, as Peter says, (not by any ordinary means of revelation through a prophet or individual, but) "from the excellent glory,—from heaven."\* It was the consummation of *theologic* revelation, it was the authentication of Christ as the Son of God, and as the supreme director of what was to be done and believed by man. Just as "the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, *that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.*" The same Divine authentication that was given to Moses was given to Christ, with this important difference, that every law which Moses was to promulgate was given to Moses by God himself; whereas, when Christ appeared it was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, *hear him,*"—constituting Christ the supreme and authoritative revealer of the new dispensation. Thus, then, Christ was installed, not merely by miracles, which Moses and Aaron also wrought, but by the voice from

\* A distinct acknowledgment that heaven may be about us, even though we cannot see it, and that we are as it were only shut out from the true universe, inhabiting a sort of vestibule or outward chamber of existence, where we must live by faith and not by sight. "Our Father, which art in heaven," is not addressed to God in some far distant star, for God is *everywhere*, and can reveal himself at any moment.

the excellent glory,—by God as the infinite and supreme Lord, verifying the person and the mission of the God-man, who was the true and only *Mediator*, the true and only *Redeemer*.

Having thus endeavoured to estimate the Decalogue in its external relations, and to determine its position in the scheme of Revelation, we shall consider for a moment what its *internal character* was,—what it *meant*.

What *was* the Decalogue?

It was the Revelation of God in his personality, and the reduction to positive statute of the moral law which was befitting to a pure human nature, with the addition of a command to set apart one day in seven for the universal cessation of worldly labour. The Decalogue, then, naturally falls to be considered under three heads.

It, first, answers the question, “*Who* is God?”

Second, it specifies the law which the moral intuitions absolutely approve, but which *fallen* man would never have discovered.

And, third, it appoints a time of rest from worldly labour, thereby perpetually showing forth that the curse of earthly toil was graciously relaxed one day in seven.

1. First, then, the Decalogue reveals *who* is God.

This question is insoluble to the reason. Reason, at the utmost, conducts us to the conclusion that *there is* a God,—a supreme and divine person; but the knowledge of the fact that God is, differs essentially from the knowledge of the person who is

God. This is the difference. Reason assures us *that* God is; but we cannot know whether God will deign to hold communication with us,—to instruct us,—to guide us,—to preserve us, otherwise than by the general laws which relate to organization,—to explain to us specifically his will,—to forgive our transgressions of his laws,—to aid the infirmities of our nature,—to reconcile us to himself,—and to end that moral strife and intellectual doubt which is a portion of our inheritance. Reason is here powerless. With reason alone, we are on the dark side of the universe, shut out from God,—but knowing that there is a God from whom we are shut out.

One word of Revelation solves the whole; a single word of communication from God cleaves the universe of knowledge to its very centre, and lays bare the immortal secret. “I am the Lord thy God” is no sooner spoken, than the realm of the cognisable is bathed in the ineffable light. That single sentence contains more *knowledge* than all the efforts of all the intellects that ever bent their powers to the study of philosophy.

This, in fact, is the *second condition* that Revelation must fulfil. Without knowing *who* is God, we should be wanderers in the outward region, where all possible knowledge would be only a better kind of ignorance,—a knowledge that we *did* not know, and *could* not know. We should not have specified the *universe*, but should only have specified the terms of the necessity under which we were *to remain in ignorance*; we should have specified our own intel-

lectual incapacity, and attained, not to a knowledge of God, but to a knowledge of those limitations of our intellectual nature which would forbid the possibility of our attaining to the divine knowledge. All pretensions of knowing *the Absolute*, if by *the Absolute* be meant God, are based on a phenomenon which is common to other pursuits as well as to philosophy. The poet has his *inspiration*, the devotee (in any religion) his *rapture*, the painter his one fair vision of absolute beauty,—which, as it were, has revealed itself from some other world; why, then, should we forbid to the philosopher his intellectual *ecstasy*, which may proceed from the super-excitation of the rational faculty, just as the rapture of religious ecstasy proceeds from some super-excitation of the devotional faculty even in a *false* religion? But this philosophic ecstasy, which professes to reach the absolute, does nothing more than lead us to the centre of a circle. We may follow each radius in the pursuit of the centre, and we may possibly *find* the centre; but the moment we have found it, it vanishes. It is *nothing*,—the centre has *no* dimension, and centre though it be, with positive relations to all around it, it is in itself *nothing*; and the moment we arrive at it, all positive conception of substantive existence disappears. So it is with the philosophic conception of the *absolute*. Phenomena are the radii of knowledge, and we may pursue them till the sensible dimension disappears. We then find *the absolute*; but in finding it, we have found only the centre, that has no conceivable existence as a positive item,

but which exists only in and through the positive *relations* that surround it on every side. We have arrived at the absolute *nothing*; and so true is this, that one German school pretends to make a synthesis of this philosophy, and to develop *the all* out of the nothing, having reduced the all *into* the nothing.

The whole theory of the scriptural Revelation proceeds on the principle of revealing a PERSON, not merely a fact. The Revelation is not "*that there is*," but "I AM." God does not confine himself to the announcement *that he is*; but he makes known his name, his attributes, and his purposes. It is a personal Revelation, beyond which we can conceive nothing in kind, although there may be an indefinite increase in degree; it is absolute in quality, but it may go on indefinitely in quantity. It is, in fact, the Revelation of the true God; and God in making himself known, has solved the mystery of the universe, and left man not to exist in *doubt*, but to live in *faith*.

2. The Decalogue, again, contains the *moral law*.

A moral law necessarily implies three things:—first, the moral LAWGIVER; second, the moral capacity of the creature owing obedience; and, third, the law itself, or body of specific commandment which may be intelligently apprehended.

Man, with his moral intuitions, has a *capacity*,—a capacity for understanding moral obligation, and for subjecting himself to moral command. His capacity is based upon intuitions which form a portion of his nature; but these intuitions are only the vague pre-



parations for something which is objective to himself. They fix upon man *general* duties, or general principles of duty; and by very careful and impartial investigation, they might even originate some of the specific duties which are incumbent on the race. But the moral intuitions are totally *insufficient*, and they must find their objective correlative before they can come into that formal and consistent operation which constitutes the main end of existence. True, we may be told of man's moral capacity, and we may be called on to magnify human nature,—we may be told that man is a great and glorious being, because he is endowed with these intuitions,—we may be called on to laud the dignity of humanity, seeing that it is so separated from the animated creation that surrounds us. All this may be true; but we must not forget that the very essence of moral nature supposes the specific law and the definite *Lawgiver*,—not merely the vague intuition, which impels us to acknowledge *some* law, whether it be correct or incorrect. The moral scheme is only complete when the correlatives of the intuitions are discovered: and these correlatives constitute *the body of truth*; whereas the intuitions, at the utmost, only constitute the innate capacity for the reception of truth, when the truth is made known from some objective source.

We shall here, then, consider the nature of this moral law which was revealed in the Decalogue; and this will afford us the opportunity of illustrating the two distinct meanings of the term *law*.

First, then, let us suppose that man was entirely

pure and innocent, that he had an entirely *good* nature, and that he had lived in the world in the habitual expression of his native innocence. By an observation of what he did, and what he did not do, we should arrive at an *inductive* law of his conduct, just as we arrive at the inductive laws which prevail in the physical universe. We should observe that he did *not* make graven images, nor worship them; we should observe that he did not kill, did not steal, did not bear false witness, and did not covet any thing that was his neighbour's. All this we should *observe*; and we should arrive at the *inductive law*, that idolatry, murder, theft, false witness, and covetousness, were not the fit and becoming actions of a human being. But by mere observation alone we should never arrive at the principle that man *ought* not to murder and steal; we might *conclude* that he ought not, but we should never certainly know that he ought not. We should only know certainly the fact that he *did* not; and though we might have a high presumption that these actions were unbecoming, inasmuch as he constantly and invariably avoided them, we should never arrive at that specific certainty which accompanies the other meaning of the term *law*. We should only have *the constantly recurring fact*,—that is, the inductive form of law,—the generalised or universalised *occurrence*.

It is quite otherwise with the law which is expressed in distinct *legislation*. Legislation exhibits the *imperative* nature of the fact, whether the fact do or do not take place in actual reality. The fact

*ought* to take place; and this is the sum and substance of moral command. Hence, when man was a *fallen* creature, he required to know the specific duties which it was incumbent on him to fulfil, and the specific crimes and sins which it was incumbent on him to avoid committing. He never would *spontaneously* exhibit the realization of law, except under the most erroneous and corrupted form. He would mistake that for a duty which was in reality a crime, and that for a crime which was in reality a duty; he would fill the earth with error, cruelty, and violence, and would wander on in a constant scene of uncertain wickedness, sinning and repenting, doubting and believing,—at one moment giving way to passion, at another to remorse,—at one moment believing the most frantic acts to be sacred duties, at another distrusting his judgment, and suffering under the agonies of his mingled emotions. He would be—like the world that he had made—a *confusion*,—a wretched wreck, storm-tossed on the tempestuous sea of passion in the dark night of consummate ignorance, without helm, without haven, and without hope. Such did the Decalogue find man, when once and for all it opened up to him the course he was to steer, shedding the rays of heavenly light across the dark waters of his existence, and guiding him, by divine illumination, through the disasters of his lost condition.

We consider, then, the Decalogue as *the permanent rule of life*, graciously revealed by Almighty God for the purpose of instructing man in the law of right-

eousness. It was not given to *justify* man ; it could not *save*, but it clearly exhibited the things which man *ought to do*, and the things which man ought *not* to do. It was not abrogated by Christ, but fulfilled by Christ.

§ 6. We have now (though we have left many things unsaid which might have found a fitting place at this portion of our dissertation—things on which we should desire to enlarge at some future time)—we have now to turn to the third occasion on which God spoke directly to man, without a mediator, in the plenitude of power, and with a command intended, not for any special person, but for the whole human race.

We come to THE INJUNCTION, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; *hear him.*”

This was the third grand Revelation from heaven,—the conclusion of the whole matter, so far as divine command went. “*Hear him,*” was the final precept,—the winding up of that long scheme of preparative guidance which found its consummation in the incarnation of the Son of God.

We have already said, that the three laws have a logical connection : for, in fact, Christ is called the second Adam ; and also, Christ came to fulfil the law—which may, perhaps, be here taken as signifying the whole body of law, thereby achieving a perfect righteousness of *obedience*. In Christ the law was perfectly satisfied, and by him *alone* was it ever satisfied ; so that we must look to the law on the one hand, and to Christ on the other, otherwise the

Christian scheme is made unintelligible, or transformed from a scheme of *redemption* into some vague and inconsistent scheme of moral teaching.

To regard Christ as a moral teacher of *duties*, and *merely* as a moral teacher, is in fact to destroy, not only the Christology, but to destroy the whole scheme of biblical Revelation. If Christ were merely a moral teacher, the revelation, the record, the prophecy, the type, the symbol, the great allegory of the Abrahamic selection, the promised land, nay, the gospel itself, the apostolic epistle, and the apocalypse, sink into a vain and unintelligible confusion, without a single shred of probability to claim any man's belief, and without a single ray of hope to enlighten the dark vision of man's future destiny.

As the whole scheme of biblical instruction hinges on the character of Christ, and the object of his incarnation, we shall state precisely what we conceive to be the teaching of the Bible on this subject:—

1. Christ is a divine person.
2. The Son of God.
3. Equal and one with the Father.
4. Claiming as his right the worship of man's soul.
5. He became incarnate.
6. And was born of the virgin Mary.
7. To justify and fulfil God's perfect law.
8. And to redeem his people by the sacrifice of himself.

And here we come to the essential character of the great mass of the biblical scheme, namely, that it is *Christology*, and not merely *Theology*.

For man, in his present condition, a mere theology would be inoperative, inefficient. It could do nothing for us but exhibit the righteous grounds of our condemnation. It would enlighten us, but it would enlighten us only to render apparent the grounds of our absolute destruction. Not only should we *be* lost, but we should *see* that we were lost, and lost without the possibility of restoration. A theology—meaning thereby the exposition of the being and attributes of God, with the specification of his righteous law, and an exhibition of the relations which man bears to God—would be only a perfect demonstration that “all have sinned; for by the law is the knowledge of sin, and by the law shall no flesh be justified.” Thus the biblical scheme is a *theology* for the exhibition of the divine perfections, for the enunciation of the perfect law, and for the condemnation of all who have broken the law, both through their actual transgression, and through the inheritance of disobedience which derives from the original transgression of our first parent.

But the biblical scheme is not a theology for the purpose of enabling present man to *work* out a successful probation. Man has *already* come short of the divine requirements, and is *already* under condemnation; so that, in fact, his probation is past, and if he cannot find a sacrifice that will be accepted by God, all that theology can teach him will be only that his own righteousness never could be transformed into the means of justification.

The great practical revelation, then, of the Bible,

is the *Christology*, the Christian scheme of the incarnation and redemption, faintly announced to Adam, foreshadowed in the ceremonial law and in the history of the Hebrew people, prophetically anticipated by those ancient seers who were under divine influence and illumination, and realised in the appearance of the Son of God on the earth. This is not the theme of the Bible merely, it is the theme of the whole world's history. The progress of history has been co-ordinated in relation to this one master event, which is the central point of all history, of all religion, of all true philosophy, of all morals, of all hope for the future, and of all possible good. It is the essence of the world's present being, the origin and the end of the terrestrial dispensation, the Alpha and the Omega of all that relates to the world, and of all that interests man; it is the one thing needful, the sum total of all necessary knowledge, and the Revelation, not merely of the ground of man's condemnation, but of the means by which man can be saved. It is emphatically *the* Revelation,—the Revelation, not of a fact or of a law, but the Revelation of the Son of God himself; who, visiting the world for the purpose of redemption, has dispelled all doubts and made known *the truth*,—bringing man into a new relation to God, and exhibiting that wondrous plan by which man, once lost and fallen, may be permanently restored to the divine family, and cleansed from the pollution of his sinful nature.

We have now, therefore, to inquire into some of the prominent points of the Christology.

In the first place, we must consider that between the righteous God and the fallen creature there could be no other relation than that of judge and criminal. God, as lawgiver, must justify his law; and man, having no possible means of fulfilling the law, must abide the consequences of his lost condition. With God as the lawgiver, man can have no hope; for the law is the reason of man's condemnation, and it has no provision for any thing like *forgiveness*.

Thus, then, the first main fact of the Christology is, that Christ is the incarnate God,—that he is the God-man,—that he is very God of very God, and yet the Son of the Virgin,—that he is the MEDIATOR, the great High Priest of a new covenant;—that he has the whole nature of man, so that he may bear our sorrows, understand our griefs, and represent his people; and yet that he is God, who can save to the uttermost all who come to him by faith;—and that, being God and being man, he is the second Adam, to fulfil the law *perfectly*; and the divine Redeemer, who makes atonement for sin by a sacrifice which is infinitely acceptable.

Thus, also, after the fall there could be nothing valid for man except a Christology. God as God was the JUDGE,—man as man was the *criminal*; and no redemption could take place without a mediator and an atoning sacrifice. All that human nature could do was insufficient, and all that ceremonial observance could do was vain and useless. The plan, whatever it might be, must be divine,—of divine origin, and of divine achievement. And this



wonder, this mystery, this glorious plan of redeeming love, is carried out by the incarnation of Christ, who stands on earth as perfect man, and who sits upon the throne at the right hand of the Father as perfect God: God and man,—man and God, united into a mysterious personality, that satisfies every possible requirement of our nature, and shows us at once how God may be perfectly just, and yet the justifier of the chief of sinners.

When, therefore, the voice from the excellent glory gives the command, "*Hear him,*" we are not to anticipate a new *law*; for Christ came to fulfil the law, and to develop that scheme by which the fallen nature of man might be supplied with a divine grace that should give man *a new power of obedience*. What is the end of human existence? The perfect love of God and perfect obedience to his law. But fallen man can neither love nor obey; and Christ comes, so to restore his people, by the renewal of their nature, that they may be brought to see the beauty of holiness, and to strive after an obedience of which they had no previous conception, and for which they had no previous capacity.

In endeavouring, therefore, to extract the essential theory of the Christology, we shall find two things: first, that it is *not* in harmony with the original constitution of man, and that it contradicts (or if that term be considered liable to objection, that it entirely *surpasses and goes beyond*) the natural reason of man: and, second, that it gives the promise of new and supernatural powers,—in fact, of

a divine power, to enable man to love the holiness which by nature he could not love; and to enable him to strive after an obedience which, without the divine aid, would have been impossible.

First, then, we have to consider the peculiar characteristic of Christianity,—that characteristic which separates it from every other system of morals or religion ever professed on the surface of the earth. In so doing, we shall find an entirely new philosophy of morals, and an entirely new philosophy of man,—a system which *transcends* all possible efforts of the human reason, and establishes the Christology on a pinnacle of its own, where it acknowledges no relationship to any other system save that which was the symbolic representative of itself,—its shadow that had gone before.

*The peculiar characteristic of Christianity.*

The conception of merit and demerit is common to all mankind. All men have the idea of innocence and guilt, of right and wrong, of righteousness and unrighteousness. Whatever diversities of opinion there may be among different nations, or among different men, as to what particular acts are right or wrong, all accord in the one general principle, or general fact, that there is a something right and a something wrong, and that it is possible for men to be blameworthy or meritorious, innocent or guilty.

On the universality of this conception is based all that is known as morals, and all that is known as religion; and when it is said that “man is a moral being,” all that is thereby meant is, that man has

the capacity of conceiving his voluntary actions to be right or wrong, and himself in a condition of innocence or guilt.

Co-extensive with this conception of right and wrong, is the conception of the mode by which men naturally judge of merit and demerit. They judge, universally, that merit or demerit is inherent in the individual, according to the character of his thoughts, his feelings, and his actions. If the thoughts, the feelings, and the actions of a man, are what any man, or any nation, judges to be *right*; then, in the estimation of that man, or that nation, is he considered meritorious: and if his thoughts, his feelings, and his actions, are judged to be *wrong*; then he himself is considered to be blameworthy or guilty.

This mode of pronouncing judgment on the character of an individual appears to form part of the original constitution of the human mind. It is underived, primary, and universal. It may be observed in the earliest dawn of mind that breaks forth in the infant, and it may be traced, in unalloyed consistency, through every system of morals that has emanated from the mind of man; so perfectly intuitive does this mode of judgment appear, that no other mode seems ever to have suggested itself to the human mind. All that men think, all that men say, and all that men have written, on the subject of morals, is based on the principle that a man is meritorious or blameworthy, innocent or guilty, according to what he himself *is and does, is not and does not*. In every age and in every nation

a man's own character has been made the measure of his righteousness ; neither does it seem possible that the human mind could ever have originated any other principle on which to pronounce its judgment. The infant and the aged man, the most unlettered barbarian and the most profound philosopher, have agreed, in the most perfect unanimity of judgment, that the man whose own character and actions are good, is the man who is meritorious ; and that the man whose own character and actions are bad, is the man who is blameworthy and guilty.

Where justice and benevolence are held to be virtues, there also is the just and benevolent man held to be meritorious ; and where the slaughter of the unbeliever is viewed as the highest duty, there also is the blood-stained warrior deemed worthy of the highest praise and the highest reward. Whatever judgment may be passed upon the action, the same judgment is pronounced on the man who, knowingly and wittingly, performs the action ; and praise or blame is accorded exclusively on the principle, that the man who acts righteously is righteous, and that the man who acts unrighteously is unrighteous.

Let us now conceive another principle. Let us suppose some one to advance, that a man is righteous, *not* on account of what *he himself* does, but on account of what is done by another,—that a man is *not* reckoned righteous on account of the goodness of his own actions, but reckoned righteous because the actions of another are good.

Could the human mind conceive such a principle? Is it not absolute foolishness? Is it not altogether incomprehensible? When did the coldest abstraction of the speculatist, or the wildest dream of the fanatic, ever invent so strange a thought—so vain, so idle a supposition?

And still more strange,—it is TRUE. For, “as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”—(Rom. v.)

This, then, is the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity,—the character by which it is entirely separated from every other system of religion, and from every theory of morals that has emanated from, or been excogitated by, the human intelligence: and though in sacrificial rites the Christian may perceive a faint emblem of the truth, the unenlightened Jew or Pagan, who offered a sacrifice for sin, judged not differently from other men as to the character of human righteousness; for he deemed the offering of a sacrifice a right action, and the man who made the offering *meritorious*, on account of having done so.

This Christian truth is emphatically *foolishness* to the philosophic moralist, and a stumbling-block to the pharisaical professor of *self*-righteousness. It is folly when brought in contact with the natural principle by which men universally judge of merit or praiseworthiness; and it must ever remain an

obstacle and a stumbling-block to those who are intent on raising a righteousness of their own, based on the meritorious performance of any duties whatever.

The scheme of righteousness contained in Christian doctrine must necessarily have been a matter of Revelation, authenticated and supported by the evidence of miracles. It must have been *revealed*, because it surpasses every thing that men naturally conceive on the subject of righteousness; and it must have been supported by miracles, because, without the authentication of miraculous evidence, none would have been assured of the truth of a principle so diametrically opposed to every other system of human credence. *Vicarious* righteousness, or righteousness through another, could never have originated in the human mind, and never could have been believed had it not been supported by supernatural evidence, which, when fairly examined, left no possible room for doubt.

Christianity alone furnishes an answer to the question, "How shall a man be just before God?" And the answer is of infinite importance: "The just shall live by his faith." "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

This gives to man a righteousness which is not of his own procuring, one which depends not on himself, but on the Lord Jesus Christ; and no man can be a Christian (that is, a follower of Christ) until he entirely abandons the natural scheme of self-righteousness, and unreservedly accepts the super-

natural scheme of vicarious righteousness set before him in the gospel.

And who is the Lord Jesus Christ?

This question may be answered from two sources: first, from systems of theology, written by uninspired men; or from the Scriptures, written by men under the immediate inspiration of God. In the former, the Saviour is regarded speculatively; in the latter, the Saviour is presented historically. We prefer, on this occasion, to take the historical account of the Messiah.

These, then, are the historical facts:—

About eighteen hundred years ago, in the time of Augustus Cæsar, there appeared in Palestine (Judea, &c.) a person who was the son of a virgin. He had all the attributes of man, with one exception,—no error could be detected either in his words or in his actions. In worldly circumstances his lot was one of poverty and obscurity, for he was dependent for his daily food and shelter on the kindness of his friends. Of his early history we have little information, except that his birth was ushered in by prophetic announcement, and that, while still an infant, he was regarded as a holy person by some who had received divine intimation of his extraordinary dignity. Thus, when his mother carried him to the Temple, to offer the sacrifice appointed in the Jewish law at the birth of every male child, Simeon, a just and devout man, who was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and to whom it was revealed by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death till he had seen the Lord's

Anointed, took the child in his arms and blessed God, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

This, with the general intimation, that the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, that he was filled with wisdom, and that the grace of God was upon him, forms nearly the whole of our information as to the early years of the person—Jesus, who was called the ANOINTED.

The history of what Jesus said and did commences only from the time when he began to be about thirty years of age; and by general admission he stands out from all other persons mentioned in history, as not coming within the limits of comparison. The sublimity of his doctrine, the purity of his life, and the perfect nature of his character, distinguish him as knowing more than man can naturally know, and as being more than man can naturally be. But to these he superadded an unlimited power of working miracles, and an unlimited knowledge of the thoughts that were passing in the hearts of men.

When thirty years of age, he began to teach his countrymen the true character of God, the true character of man, and the true destiny that awaited the human race. And to authenticate the divine origin of his teaching, he wrought a multitude of miracles,—opening the eyes of the blind, making the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk,



and even raising the dead from the grave; shadowing forth, in the supernatural power he exercised over the physical frailties and corruptions of mankind, that spiritual power which he was also able and willing to exert over their spiritual frailties, spiritual corruptions, and spiritual death. His life was an unceasing progress of benevolence and kindness, of the most tender sympathy for the afflicted, and of the most efficient aid for those who sought his help. None came to him in vain,—none was sent empty away.

It may well be supposed that the account this person gave of himself could not fail to be deeply interesting, but it rises into inestimable importance when we find him declaring, that he,—a man in all outward appearance, eating as a man, drinking as a man, sleeping as a man, walking with his friends, discoursing with them, and manifesting all the attributes of humanity save sin,—that he, Jesus, was the Son of God, and that whosoever should believe on him should not perish, but have *everlasting life*.

Among the many extraordinary circumstances that attended the eventful life of Jesus, not the least extraordinary were his predictions as to the character of his death, and the *purpose* for which he was to die. He taught that he should die,—*not* in the common course of nature,—*not* from the ordinary necessity that brings human beings to the grave,—*but that he should lay down his life of himself, for the salvation of his people*. And for the propagation of this doctrine, on which alone must be rested all man's reasonable hope of a future glorious immortality, he selected

a certain number of men, who were to carry its glad tidings unto all nations, and tribes, and people; and to declare free remission of sin, and perfect righteousness, for all who should truly believe.

The scheme of Christian righteousness could not be so completely unveiled to the human apprehension until after the death of Jesus; and thus the teaching of this great doctrine was more full and explicit after that stupendous event. In the writings (commonly called the *Gospels*) of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we have an account of the life and teaching of the Lord Jesus himself; and in the Acts of the Apostles, we have an account of the life and teaching of some of those who had been selected to propagate the glad tidings. In the Epistles, we have the written instructions of the inspired servants of Christ; and in the Apocalypse, we have the revelation of the future coming of Jesus,—of his divine glory,—of the immortal bliss and perfect happiness of those who have taken him for their righteousness.

A brief summary of Christian doctrine is contained in the 9th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews: “But now once, in the end of the world, hath Christ appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.”

The question now arises, “Whence comes it that so great a discrepancy exists between the natural

or intuitive judgment of mankind, and the truth revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ? ”

To suppose the natural and intuitive judgment of mankind to be altogether erroneous, *and always to have been erroneous*, would be contrary to the supposition that God constituted the human mind in accordance with the circumstances in which man was placed at his creation ; and would also be contrary to the very Revelation that now teaches us the falsehood of every principle that would make righteousness to consist in obedience to any law whatever.

In every man's mind there is naturally implanted the abstract principle, “ That the man who perfectly obeys right law is righteous, and that the man who disobeys right law is unrighteous ; ” and this principle is held by the human mind to be necessarily and universally true. This principle, however, is abstract ; that is, it pronounces not on a particular fact that *is*, but on a general fact that must be, provided the premises are actually real. It states, “ If there be a right law, and if there be a man who perfectly obeys that right law, then the necessary and universal consequence is, that the man who so obeys is righteous.” And the contradiction between the natural scheme of righteousness, and the scheme revealed in the gospel, does not affect the conclusion, but depends on the non-reality of one of the premises. The conclusion is valid, under all circumstances,—that is, it flows necessarily from the premises,—but Revelation steps in with the fact, that no man, no woman, from the commencement of time to

the present day, *has* perfectly obeyed right law ; and that, therefore, no human being is, or ever has been, righteous through obedience to law. The abstract principle is correct, but its non-applicability to man is universal ; and if man be righteous at all, it must be through some other means than that of obedience.

In the original condition of man's creation, righteousness would have been by obedience, and the constitution of the human mind was regulated according to that condition. But in the present circumstances of man, there is an accidental condition that overturns every application which might be made of a principle originally true and *applicable* ; for no man *is* obedient,—and, consequently, no man is righteous *through* obedience.

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets ; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe ; for there is no difference : for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ; *being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.*”

Having thus endeavoured to point out the peculiar characteristic of Christianity,—that which separates it from every thing that could be excogitated by the reason, when the reason takes what may be termed the merely scientific and philosophical view

of the universe,—we have now to inquire into the character of the Christian doctrine itself.

The great question is,—

“How shall a man be just before God?”

And this question the Christology answers in the most precise and unhesitating manner.

We shall now, therefore, consider the Christian doctrine (or teaching), as to the method by which the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ are made available to man; and also inquire what is necessary on man's part, before he can be discharged from the condemnation which has already been declared on every man and woman on account of sin: “*He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.*”—(John iii. 18.)

We have, therefore, to treat, not of any possible scheme of *human* righteousness, but of that divine scheme of which God is the author. This, then, is—

#### JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

The Greek word πιστις (*pistis*), which is rendered *faith* in the English version of the New Testament, occurs *very* frequently in those writings,—about 244 times altogether. In Acts xvii. 31, it is rendered *assurance*; in 2 Thess. ii. 13, it is rendered *belief*; and in Tit. ii. 10, it is rendered *fidelity*. In all the other passages, amounting to 241, if we mistake not, it is translated *faith*. It will be observed, that *faith* is a noun substantive, and that language can express

the *action* as well as the *object*; and this it does by a *verb*. The verb πιστεύω (*pistūo*) is the word made use of in the New Testament, to signify *faith operating*; and this word is translated *believe*. It occurs even more frequently than *faith*; and the two taken together form the most prominent subject of the Christian writings.

In the New Testament it is clearly and specifically declared, that man's salvation depends on *faith*, or *believing*;—that is, that if a man *believe*, he shall be saved; and if he *believe not*, he shall be condemned.

We shall hereafter quote certain texts or portions of the sacred writings, in which it is distinctly taught that man is justified by faith; but it must be remembered that the doctrine does not depend *merely* on those passages that announce it directly in words, but also, and very particularly, on the whole mass of revealed truth contained in the Scriptures. Just as we do not judge whether the rain that descends on the earth is beneficial to the vegetable creation, merely by observing *one* or *two* drops of its water, and following them through their transformations until they are absorbed by a plant; but also, and more particularly, by observing the general effects that follow the genial showers, when we behold the fields renewing their greenness and their vigour, and see the whole face of nature refreshed by the moisture, and every plant growing and expanding with a new and vigorous life. And so it is with Scripture; we are not confined to the letter of one or two passages, which

may directly teach us a truth in the most plain and convincing terms; but we may also look at the truth as it stands connected with the great body of Revelation, and thus place it on a broad and stable basis, from which it cannot be removed. We may study how the whole scheme of Revelation works together,—how part illustrates part,—how the related *events* are only teachings of the very same doctrines by *actions* instead of words,—how all, in fact, that Scripture teaches, is only a reproduction of one and the same truth under different forms and at different stages,—and how all that is taught circles around Christ, who is the centre of the whole scheme, from the gate of Eden to the day of judgment. The Revelation, in fact, is *the Revelation of THE CHRIST*,—the manifestation of the Son of God. *Truth* may be taken to pieces and studied in *portions*, but the Revelation of Christ is *one* Revelation, on which the whole scheme of history is constructed, and on which God rules the whole destinies of the world for the final triumph of the church, and for the glorious time when Christ's kingdom shall be established on earth, as we anticipate from prophecy.

We state, then, that some of the most important truths revealed in Scripture depend not merely on those passages in which they are announced directly in words, but also on their connection with the great body of scriptural truth, revealed and developed by many different men in different ages of the world, as they were moved and instructed by the Spirit of God. If we take, for example, the scriptural teaching of our

Saviour's atonement, we should certainly be far from pursuing the course most likely to end in our right apprehension of the truth, were we to adhere to those texts alone that directly and plainly announce that the Lord Jesus made an atonement for mankind. It is true, that even in the letter of instruction there is sufficient to establish the fact indubitably, that Jesus who was crucified, died not for himself, but for sinful man. But the mighty event is found not merely in those passages that directly declare it in words, but in the whole united body of scriptural truth, which is spread over many centuries; and in the historical accounts of God's ancient people it is reiterated in almost every possible form. It is darkly hinted in the first promise made to fallen man, and from that very moment it is shadowed forth in almost every page of Scripture, with constantly increasing distinctness. Why was there an Isaac led to Mount Moriah, or a Joseph carried captive into Egypt? why was there a bondage and a better land? a Joshua, a Samson, or a David? why was there a sacrifice and a high priest, a fiery serpent and a brazen image? nay, why was there a chosen people, with the law and the covenant, with the prophet, the priest, and the king? why but that the salvation which is by Jesus Christ might be made so plain to men, that they should be without excuse if they rejected the Messiah? The *atonement* on the cross, with the consequent salvation of the believer, is the very foundation of all Scripture, without which there could be no true religion. The law and the prophets, the people of Israel and the



land of Canaan, are but portions of God's great teaching, that in due time his well-beloved Son should appear, to "bear the sin of many," and to "make intercession for the transgressors."

And so it is with man's justification by *faith*. This truth depends not merely on those passages which distinctly announce it in words, but on the whole body of Scripture, as one Revelation,—all the parts of which were fitted and intended to instruct man in those truths which could be made effectual to the salvation of his soul. The death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus is the *fact* of the Christian religion; and justification by faith is the *doctrine* of the Christian religion,—and as such, it is taught in many different ways, and by many different figures, from the beginning of the Bible to the end of it. As the *fact* of Christ suffering for man pervades the ceremonial law and the prophecies, so does the doctrine of justification through faith, and not through obedience, as the one great doctrine which the Bible was intended to teach,—which is, in fact, the great practical end for which the Bible itself was bestowed upon mankind. It is true, that the doctrine does not *appear* on the surface of the Old Testament with so palpable a distinctness as the death of the Messiah: but this partial obscurity vanishes, in a great measure, when we apply the key of the New Testament to unlock the treasures of the Old; and when we go from the apostle's teaching of the doctrine, back to the history of God's chosen people, and compare his inspired assertion of the truth with the foreshadow-

ing events that might, and no doubt did, bring the truth home with peace and consolation to the heart of the pious believer, we can have no hesitation in affirming, that justification by faith is the one great doctrine of the Old Testament, as much as it is the one great doctrine of the New. The question is not so much, how *plainly* the doctrine is taught, but how *universally and exclusively* it is taught; and we maintain, that from the promise of the Seed that should "bruise the head of the serpent," down to the "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings," of the last chapter of Malachi, there is no other doctrine whatever taught in Scripture as to the means of man's acceptance with God, except that the *believer* is graciously accepted, and the *unbeliever* rejected.

It may seem that obedience is very often, and, indeed, most often, made the test of judgment; but this arises from a misunderstanding as to what was the law. The law of the ten commandments was the pure law, which if any man had always perfectly obeyed, it would have been reckoned to him of debt, and he would have been justified by his obedience. No other law was known in the same character, no other law could justify; and yet we find that *obedience* is reckoned the test of Saul's rejection and of David's acceptance. Now, if we consider for a moment, we shall find that this test is *never* applied,—on *no* occasion whatever,—as meaning *obedience to the Decalogue* (the only *law* that could justify), but as obedience to some other commands given at various

times by the Almighty. What, then, was this obedience? It was nothing more than the *sign or mark of faith*; just as the Christian's works do *not* justify him, but they are evidences of the faith that does justify. And thus we often find the works, which are the fruit and the evidence, put for the principle of faith from which they flow ;—a mode of expression which will not suit systematic theology, but which is scriptural, and therefore perfectly good and correct for the great practical purposes of religious instruction.

In Scripture, then, we have two methods of instruction: the first, by direct declaration in words; and the second, by the record or history of those great events which God selected for the purpose of teaching the same truths. That a man is justified by faith, and not by works, is taught by the first method, clearly, distinctly, and indisputably. But what we also wish to impress upon the reader is, that the same truth is taught in *every* part of Scripture that teaches how man can be saved; and to come at once to the great example set forth in illustration of the coming judgment, we take the case of Noah and the deluge.

In the 6th chapter of Genesis, we are informed that God purposed to destroy man from the face of the earth; but that he would establish his covenant with Noah, who was a righteous man, and would save him, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives. God commanded Noah to make an ark of gopher-wood, which should be the means of his safety while

the waters were on the face of the earth. Noah obeyed the command,—constructed the ark, entered it with his family, and was saved. We might here, perhaps, suppose that Noah was saved by his *obedience*, (and, in one sense, that is true,) but let us inquire at the inspired apostle for his explanation of the event: Heb. xi. 7, “By *faith* Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by *faith*.”

This example is entitled to especial attention, from the circumstance of the deluge being the very type selected to figure forth the judgment to come. Let us turn for a moment to the circumstances of the case. Scripture declares that there is a day coming which God hath set apart for the judgment of the world; that men are naturally sinful; and that no man can naturally stand justified in the sight of God. Scripture also declares that there is a *supernatural* means of safety provided, in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, who offered himself a propitiation for our sins. Scripture also declares, that whosoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved, and that whosoever believes not shall be condemned. The circumstances here are, the spiritual and final salvation or condemnation of the members of the human race. The truths regarding these events are taught in words,—plainly, clearly, and without mystery. But is this *all*? Far from it; the truths of religion that are the most necessary for man to know, have

been taught and illustrated in a series of events, the most stupendous in the world's history. God's method of teaching is not confined to *words*; and the spiritual judgment of mankind has been exhibited before the eyes of the world, in the record of the greatest event affecting external nature that has occurred since the appearance of the human family on the surface of the earth.

To shadow forth the judgment of the spirit, and to strike the callous heart of man with awe,—to awaken in the blinded sinner, if it were possible, some salutary fear of *future* death,—to press upon all mankind the necessity of fleeing from the coming wrath to the spiritual Ark of safety, and to convince men that judgment was a serious reality, and not an idle dream,—a world was drowned; a race of human beings, rich in all the attributes of reason and of life,—rich in the endowments they had received from the Creator,—rich in the world's fair inheritance, with its mountain, its forest, and its field, its morning and its evening, its seed-time and its harvest, its sun-shine and its shade, its azure sky and its waters teeming with life,—rich in their length of years, rich in beauty, rich in manly strength,—this race, with all its world of intellect, of heart, and of affection, was drowned in one general destruction, all save eight persons, who were saved by faith.

Again, Scripture teaches us, that in addition to the coming judgment and the coming condemnation of the unbeliever, there is a heaven, an everlasting abode of peace prepared for the believer; and this

heaven, or spiritual land of promise, was foreshadowed by a natural country, which was promised to Abraham and his seed: Gen. xii., "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and into the land of Canaan they came. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land." Now Abram was old and childless, and every natural reason and probability was *against* the occurrence of those events which the Lord had promised: "After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus. And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. *And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*"

Let us now turn to Paul's teaching, and observe the uniformity of the sacred writers as to the method of justification,—remembering that a period of 1500

years had elapsed between the writing of the Book of Genesis and the writing of the Epistle to the Romans ; and that, during that long interval, many new revelations had been made to man,—many ceremonial rites instituted, for the purpose of teaching religious truth,—many prophets and preachers of righteousness sent to instruct the people of God ; and that, finally, Emmanuel had appeared to fulfil the law and the prophets,—had taught divine truth, not as the Scribes and Pharisees, but as having authority in himself,—and had sealed the scheme of promised redemption by the shedding of his blood. All which circumstances must necessarily have altered the scheme of religious doctrine, had any such alteration been contemplated or intended : Rom. iv. 13, “ For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Ver. 20, “ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief ; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God ; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. *Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him ; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead ; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*”

Now, if we ask what are the two great salient points of human salvation, we may state these as,—first, deliverance from the condemnation of sin ; and,

second, adoption into the family of God, which shall bring with it the purification of the spirit, and ultimate translation to heaven.

[We speak here, not in the language of systematic theology, but merely as pointing out the great characteristics of the Christian doctrine, not for the purpose of evangelization, but for the purpose of argument.]

The first of these was figured in Noah and the flood; the second was figured in the seed of Abraham, and the promised land. To show forth the condemnation of sin, and the destruction to which sin necessarily leads, a world was drowned. To show forth the promised heaven that awaits the people of God, a distant country was selected, and promised to a nation. That nation was led through many miraculous and wonderful scenes, designed not merely to teach *them*, but to teach us and all mankind, the true character of practical religion, and of religious doctrine. The first event we have considered in its scriptural explanation, and have shown that Scripture declares that Noah was saved by *faith*. The second we have also considered, and have shown that Scripture declares that Abraham inherited the promised land by *faith*. Now, these two include all things relating to the ultimate destiny of man; and we therefore hold it to be the universal and exclusive doctrine of all Scripture,—whether of ancient times, before the coming of the Messiah, or of the apostolic times, when the Messiah had appeared and completed the work of human redemption,—that man



is justified by faith, and by faith alone; that no works of *meritorious obedience* which man has it in his power to perform, are of the slightest avail, as being the *ground* of man's acceptance with God,—that all such works, viewed as *means of acceptance*, are “as filthy rags:” but that God does accept the believer through his faith in the atonement, righteousness, and *person*, of the Lord Jesus Christ,—the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.

Having thus given an outline of the *universality* with which the doctrine of justification by faith is taught in Scripture, a few special passages may be adduced, in which it is taught plainly in words:—

Gen. xv. 6, “And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”

Isa. lvii. 12, “I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.”

Jer. xxxiii. 16, “And this is the name wherewith she” (Judah, Jerusalem, the people of God, the church) “shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.”

1 Cor. i. 30, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

Hab. ii. 4, “The just shall live by his faith.”

John iii. 36, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

Mark xvi. 16, “He that believeth, and is baptized,

shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (*Condemned*.—The Greek word occurs nineteen times in the New Testament, and is always rendered “condemned,” except in this passage and Rom. xiv. 23.)

John iii. 14-16, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up ; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Ver. 18, “He that believeth on him is not condemned : but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.”

John xi. 26, “Whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die.”

Heb. x. 39, “But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition ; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

The 11th chapter of the Hebrews, compared with Old Testament history ; and 1 Peter i. 5, 9, &c.

Mark v. 36, “BE NOT AFRAID, ONLY BELIEVE.”

#### THE PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.

Having thus pointed out the cardinal fact and the cardinal doctrine of the Christian Revelation, we have to estimate the general philosophy of man under the Christian system.

What is the knowledge to which man attains even under the instruction of the Christology?

It is a solution, not of the problem of the universe, but a solution of *the problem of human life*. This is its end and purpose; and only by viewing it in this aspect, can we attain to a systematic understanding of the light which Revelation throws on the phenomenon of human existence.

Human life is divided into two embranchments; the external, objective, and scientific, where the logical reason is employed to acquire truth progressively; and the internal, moral, and spiritual, where the logical reason does not progressively acquire truth.

The first embranchment includes every division of knowledge that can be mastered or achieved by the spontaneous and reflective operation of the *human intellect*. Its region is *science*, and that philosophy which may be constructed by the criticism of science. It embraces also the arts, whether imitative, creative, or scientific. It has this world for a field of operation; and it proceeds by the method of analysis, synthesis, and analogy. Its method is duplex; and in the duplexity of method may be found the key to that grand antagonism which has manifested itself as a constant phenomenon of philosophy, and which expresses itself to the popular mind as the antagonism between the inductive and the deductive methods. Aristotle is conventionally accepted as the apostle of one method, Bacon of the other; but this clumsy classification is only of value to mark the difference

which is an inherent and radical intuition of the human intellect itself,—Aristotle and Bacon being only the received representatives of methods which are as old as humanity, and which depend upon the possibility of two different starting-points.

These two methods may be termed, the method by which we make an analysis and synthesis of *thought as thought* (Aristotle), and the method by which we make an analysis and synthesis of *nature as nature* (Bacon);—to which must be added Bacon's correlative, namely, Descartes, who treated thought as a concrete reality, and applied the same method to thought that Bacon applied to external nature.

The course of history, of knowledge, of life, and, indeed, of the whole progressive phenomenon of human development, is always at one and the same time *duplex*,—both Aristotelian and Baconian.

Hence history contains within it *two* courses, which may be termed the course of *logic* and the course of *reality*; the one beginning with an ultimate abstraction of thought, and pursuing it to the point of realization; the other, beginning with the real world, and pursuing it to the ultimate abstraction. Hence the world of intellect will—unless man be destined to arrive at the point of unity—always present two great intellectual *sects*, who imagine that they are opposed to each other, but who, in fact, are only pursuing each its own limited and partial course.

Natural theology being a portion of natural knowledge, will, consequently, present itself in two forms; namely, that which proceeds on the analysis and

synthesis of *thought*,—which is the *a priori* argument, represented by Samuel Clarke ; and that which proceeds on the analysis and synthesis of *nature*, popularly represented by Paley. To these may be added the argument of *analogy* (a method strictly scientific also, and actually employed in the physical sciences,—chemistry, for instance), represented by Butler.

The *composite* argument, if properly achieved, would represent one of the mixed sciences, where mathematics combine with observation. It would be a true *progress* in the course of theological argument; just as any science has made a real progress when it becomes susceptible of mathematical deduction.

In this region and in this embranchment of life, man is *progressive*. He has more knowledge to-day than he had yesterday. Truth is *acquired*, arts are developed, and the course of humanity shows an increment of knowledge to which chronological dates can be assigned. Man, in his outward life, is essentially a progressive creature; and is thereby distinguished from the constructing animals which do *not* progress. It is a character of man, that he can and does progress; but we must not confound this indubitable fact with any supposition that the race began in a state of savage wildness, and achieved civilization,—a vain and foolish surmise, which has not a single fact to depend on.

But what is *the other* embranchment of human life? Is *it* also progressive by means of analysis, synthesis, and analogy; or is it, on the contrary, a *permanent* course of stable truth, life, action, ex-

perience,—the same to-day that it was a thousand years since?

That man has in his soul a mental, moral, and spiritual life, distinguished from the acquisition of his *intellect*, is a truth which it is needless to discuss, as the fact is the theme of every moral writer. But the question is, Is man progressive in *this* life? Does the experience of former generations descend to the present generation, as in science? Do we know more of *this* region on account of any experiences of other men, however accurately described?

Of course, we admit a successive and progressive *Revelation*; but this fact has nothing to do with our present question, which is, Was Abraham's knowledge of spiritual life capable of being transmitted to his descendants, in the same manner as his knowledge of *nature*? Or was Paul's knowledge capable of being transmitted to the early Christians, in the same manner as Aristotle's logical doctrine, and could any subsequent Christian improve on Paul's doctrine, as subsequent logicians might improve on some portions of Aristotle? Science, we know, has made immense progress since the days of the Greeks; who, however, laid its foundations, through Aristotle, Euclid, and Archimedes: and scientific men have now more *knowledge* than the Greeks had, and we can apply their knowledge and go *beyond* it. But, since the promulgation of Christian truth, has any man ever had *more* knowledge than the apostles?—meaning hereby not that verbal knowledge which may be learnt by rote, but that actual perception of spiritual

truth which was present with the apostle Paul when he wrote his epistles. We say, without hesitation, that Newton saw *farther* into nature than Aristotle did, and that Laplace saw farther than Newton, and that Lavoisier saw farther than any Greek, and that Liebig sees farther than Lavoisier; and that, in all probability, there will soon arise men who will see farther than any past or present man. They are not greater *men*;—for Socrates, the doubter, questioner, and moralist,—Plato, the comprehensive genius,—Aristotle, the analytic genius,—and Archimedes, the founder of positive science,—are the representative men of the world of intellect. We expect no greater; for, in fact, in the circumstances, we can scarcely conceive that they were as great as they were. But still, modern men have *known* more, and *do* know more. In a modern cotton factory Archimedes would be a child in knowledge, though a giant in thought. Knowledge progresses, but man does not progress,—he only fills up with realities the categories of his intellect; and the greatest genius is the man who has most capacity; while the man who has most knowledge is the man who has most material filled into his capacity.

But, while we admit that *science* has progressed, has the knowledge of *religion* progressed, since the days of the apostles? Is it not rather that men fell away from the truth, and that every effort of modern man has only been to re-approach, or *to return to*, that very same truth that Paul announced. In *theology*,—that is, in natural, scientific, or philosophi-

cal theology,—we look *forward*, knowing that every new acquisition of man will give him a more certain ground of scientific faith ; but in religion, in the spiritual life and doctrine, in the elements of our faith, and the complete exemplification of the radical truth of humanity, we ever look *backward*, even for the assurance of the coming of Him who shall come “a second time unto salvation.”

In this *spiritual life of man*, we must, however, separate between those *mysticisms* which pretend that man may have a personal and individual communication with God (in the way of personal revelation), and the Christian system, which teaches that God enlightens the human mind by the Holy Spirit, *through the teaching of the Word*.

That the Spirit of God teaches man, is a doctrine so plainly expressed in Scripture, that it stands next to the doctrines we have adduced ; but the great element of diverse opinion, in this department, is, that man may be instructed by God *directly*, or may be instructed *through the Scriptures*. In the former case, we should emancipate man from every rule of ecclesiastical order or discipline, and establish each individual Christian as, in fact, a prophet, under special inspiration ; in the latter case, we preserve the outward ordinances of religion, the validity of church discipline, the construction of the church, the appointment of officers, teachers, administrators, and courts of the church, and, in fact, *an ecclesiastical economy*, founded on the Scriptures themselves.

Now, if any doctrine be taught in Scripture with



absolute and unswerving consistency, (and, notwithstanding all the objections that have been brought against the Bible, the *consistency* of Scripture is one of its most striking peculiarities,) it is the supremacy of the revealed will of God over every effort of the human imagination, and over every dictate of the individual consciousness.

This doctrine—namely, the absolute supremacy of the revealed Word—is taught, like all the other great doctrines, from the beginning of the Bible to the end. It is taught in words, in figures, in real events, and in every form in which we can suppose teaching to be required. The very first transgression was the abandonment of the revealed Word for a superior faith in the human judgment: “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat.” And so it is with those who abandon Scripture. They *see* that the full confidence in the human faculty is destined to make them *wise*, and thus, rejecting the revealed Word, they perpetuate the first transgression.

So, also, at the very close of the Sacred Book,—almost its last words are, “If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

So, also, when Saul disobeyed the word that had been spoken to him, Samuel tells him, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat rams."—(1 Sam. xv.)

So, also, when the man of God out of Judah was commanded to eat no bread and drink no water, and at the instigation of his fellow-prophet disobeyed the voice of the Lord, he was slain by a lion.

So, also, with the very fact of a Revelation. What does a Revelation mean, but that man must abandon his judgment in every matter where God gives him the command,—using his judgment, however, to scrutinise the *evidences* of the Revelation, and to ascertain the true meaning of *what* is revealed. Not that God requires man to abandon his *reason* (as some have asserted), but that God, by placing man on a higher platform than that of mere reason, claims the right to direct man through this terrestrial probation, and to lead him to a promised land, where knowledge shall supersede that species of faith which is here required at our hands.

We have said that Revelation is the solution of a problem. It is the solution of the problem of the universe, *in so far as to enable man to achieve his terrestrial probation successfully*. It is not a scientific revelation, nor a philosophic revelation, nor a revelation of truth which can be excogitated into more perfect system, or increased in amount. It stands *permanent*, while all *scientific* truth is capable of improvement, either in its matter, its method, or its extension. But the scriptural revelation is not a

revelation of *knowledge for the instruction of the intellect*, as if man had already passed his probation ; but a revelation of truth, which contains just so much knowledge as is necessary to establish the moral system which is the end of the revelation. The earth is not man's *home*, it is the wilderness through which man is passing. And just as in the wilderness through which the children of Israel journeyed, God fed them and guided them; so in man's terrestrial condition does God feed man with sufficient truth to sustain him. Not that man enters into his *rest*, but that God will lead him in safety and security, if he confide in God, and believe in the record which God has borne of his Son.

Thus we have two kinds of knowledge, just as we have two kinds of life, and just as there are two worlds, the objective and the spiritual.

The spiritual life is an individual phenomenon, beginning with the individual, and terminating with the individual. It is not capable of transmission, like a knowledge of art or a knowledge of science; and no education, save that of God himself, can positively secure its successful issue. That which man has discovered in science, or in scientific art, can be transmitted from man to man, and thus the labours of the race in the objective world become the heritage of the unborn. But not so with spiritual knowledge, which undergoes no accumulation, and is susceptible of no transmission. This spiritual life is *the permanent of humanity*, while the intellectual life is the fluctuating of humanity. And so

Scripture is the permanent of knowledge, while science is the fluctuating or expansible of knowledge. In science, the object is to go beyond all that has hitherto been known ; in the spiritual life, the object is to absorb what has already been declared. In science, the best works are only the stepping-stones to future achievements ; in the world of religious life, the Scriptures are the well-springs of inexhaustible treasures, which may be drawn upon without diminution. In science, it is man constantly enlarging his knowledge of nature ; in Scripture, it is God declaring the absolute truth, which every man requires to know exactly in the same manner.

Hence, then, as there is a spiritual and essential world, so there is a spiritual and essential knowledge ; and as there is an objective and accidental world, so there is a scientific and accidental knowledge. Now, one of the most striking features of Scripture, is the consistent manner in which it constantly sets forth the spiritual world, and insists on a moral theme. The moral theme is never forgotten ; it is the object held constantly in view, with a persevering uniformity, that marks the Bible out from every other book that has been written. The *conduct* of man, and not his mere information, is perpetually before us in the most vivid reality. We are never allowed to wander from the main purpose, except in those few instances where a small portion of supplementary knowledge was necessary to explain to us the course of events ; and even here we are restricted to the narrowest limits, and to the bare but definite statement of facts.

Of all the books in the world, the Bible is the one that exhibits the clearest idea of a *purpose*, and the most unswerving adherence to that purpose; which seems to pervade it like a living soul, and to render it instinct with life. From beginning to end it breathes a divine air; not as if it had caught an inspiration, but as if itself were the fountain out of which the waters of life were to flow, and the heavenly country out of which the air of life was to be wafted to the soul. It breathes divinity; not as if it were ascending upwards to the Creator, but as if it were issuing forth from the eternal throne, and shedding the mantle of God's fatherly care over the lost and erring children of our outcast world—gathering back the wanderers to the divine fold, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, opening the eyes of the blind, and bringing to life the dead in trespasses and sins.

What, then, is the great conclusion that man arrives at from a criticism of natural theology and of the Scriptures? It is this,—That man is a denizen of two worlds, the one spiritual and the other natural: That in the objective world, he is called upon to study the laws which God has established for the general government of the creation, acknowledging, at the same time, that God is the GREAT RULER, who can order things according to his will, and can most certainly, and does most certainly, exercise his *providence* in the affairs of the world; that hence, in *nature*, as well as in the spiritual world, man is bound to commit himself and his cares into the hands of God; and while constantly endeavouring to increase

his knowledge, and to conform to the laws which he can discover, yet ever to rely on the overruling Power which may direct his steps aright, and lead him by a way which he knew not of: That man in the spiritual world is a fallen, lost, and ruined spirit, by nature an outcast from God, bearing a burden of guilt which must be accounted for, and a burden of sinful desires which prevents him from obeying the law of God: that Christ has appeared to offer a perfect example of righteous obedience; and also, and as especially, by his obedience *unto death*, has made an atonement for sin, and thereby has become *the righteousness* of his believing people: that inasmuch as man requires not only to be delivered from the judicial condemnation which has already been passed on him, but to be divinely delivered from the power of his sinful nature, God has promised the influence of the Holy Spirit to create anew the love of God in the soul of man, so that man shall strive after righteousness, not as a means of justification, but as the very end of his existence, to the glory of God and to his own immortal good.

The *doctrines* of the Bible are very few in number, although they may be exhibited in many various forms, and expressed with a great diversity of language or circumstance. We may sum them up in a few words,—not that we have here *all* that the Bible teaches, but that we have the essential scheme or plan upon which every thing depends:—

1. The existence of God in absolute perfection of attribute.

2. The creation, probation, temptation, and *fall* of man. The universal *guilt* of man, and universal actual transgression of every man who acts with the consciousness of volition. He either transgresses or comes short of the perfect requirement.

3. The incarnation of the Son of God for the purpose of *the redemption*,—his temptation,—his perfect righteousness of life,—his atoning death,—his resurrection, and his future coming.

4. The influence of the Holy Spirit for the sanctification of the soul.

5. The unlimited, unmerited, and absolute election by God of his people to eternal life.

6. The resurrection of the dead, the day of judgment, and the close of the terrestrial dispensation.





**TERMINAL NOTE**  
**FOR THE STUDENT OF LOGIC.**



## TERMINAL NOTE

### FOR THE STUDENT OF LOGIC.

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EVERY possible truth, every possible error, every possible proposition; every thing that man can think or believe; every thing that can be apprehended, discussed, or discoursed upon by the human reason, or in human language; must range itself under the following forms:—

THE UNIVERSAL NEGATIVE.—*Nothing is A.*

THE UNIVERSAL AFFIRMATIVE.—*Everything is A.*

THE PARTICULAR NEGATIVE.—*Something is not A.*

THE PARTICULAR AFFIRMATIVE.—*Something is A.*

To these must be added a form singularly overlooked by logicians—THE CONFESSION OF IGNORANCE: *I know not whether A is, or is not,—is anything, or nothing.*

Under these forms all human belief must be ranged; we therefore apply this scheme of human thought to the argument of theology, to show the principle on which all systems and religions must be classified.

*First.* There is the Universal Negative,—ATHEISM,—“There is no God;” or, by conversion, “God is nothing,” (save a name.)

*Second.* There is the Universal Affirmative,—Pantheism,—“God is the Universe;” or, by conversion, “All that is, is God.”

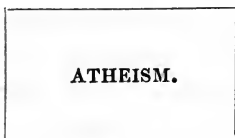
*Third.* There is the Particular Negative,—Scepticism,—“This or that is not God.” Scepticism, when applied to each and every faith, becomes Atheism; with this difference, that Scepticism is *discrete*, and proceeds in detail, while Atheism is *absolute*, and proceeds by a universal distribution.

*Fourth.* There is the Particular Affirmative,—God distinguished from the conditioned universe; or, in the language of logic, “Something is God;” with which is understood the complementary proposition, “Something is not God.”

These forms may be exhibited to the eye, thus:—

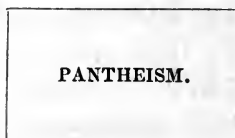
### *Universals.*

Universal Negative :



Nothing is God.

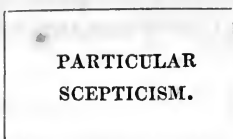
Universal Affirmative :



The Universe is God.

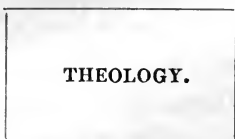
### *Particulars.*

Particular Negative :



Something is not God

Particular Affirmative :

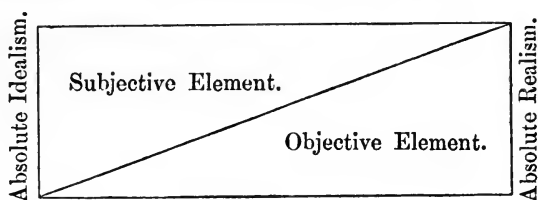


God is distinguished  
from the Universe.

These are, in general, the possibilities of a theological or anti-theological scheme of the universe: and if we take the fourth form,—Theology,—and divide it into two elements; the one *subjective*, or the product of the reason, the intuitions, or of something that resides in ourselves; the other *objective*, or the product of the senses, or of something *external* to ourselves; we arrive at a logical scheme which will classify all religions.

All religions must necessarily lie at or between absolute subjectivity, and absolute objectivity; and, therefore, if we draw a diagonal line across a diagram exhibiting the two elements, we must necessarily exhibit the position of every possible faith.

All religious credence must lie at or between faith in the absolute ideal, and faith in the absolute real,—at or between the German Negationist, who makes thought *the all*, and the African worshipper of the Fetish, who deifies the grossest matter. Thus:—



The two elements being ultimate, and relatively absolute, and being in the inverse ratio of each other, all theologic credence must lie at or between these; and, therefore, the question is, to locate the forms of faith on this scheme according to the amount that each faith contains of each respective element.

Thus, all religious credence must lie at or between philosophical Idealism and literal Paganism : but, as extremes meet, the most extreme results of each of these systems will present the same conclusion, and both will land in virtual Atheism ; for it can make no practical difference whether thought be the all, or matter the all.

All religions, therefore, must be classed under the following forms ; but, practically, some religions will be a mixture or combination of several of these forms :—

1. THEISM.—Or the bare admission of God's existence. It rejects all revelation. At one extreme it becomes Pantheism, and at the other merges into Rationalism.

2. RATIONALISM.—Which *explains away* all that is supernatural in revelation, but admits the divinity of genius, and of the higher moral teaching. At one extreme it becomes mere Theism, at the other it merges into Unitarianism.

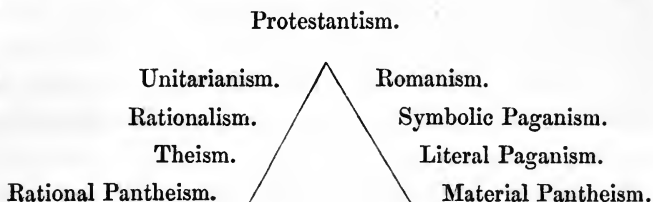
3. UNITARIANISM.—Which admits the personal God of the Bible, but denies the divinity of the Saviour. At one extreme it becomes Rationalism, at the other extreme it approaches towards Protestantism.

4. PROTESTANTISM.—Which establishes the supremacy of Scripture in all things revealed, but admits the validity of reason in all things subject to the reason and the senses.

5. ROMANISM.—Which joins to revelation the element of tradition, and denies the validity of the reason and the senses in the transubstantiation of the



figure, that must represent every possible form of religion, is as follows:—



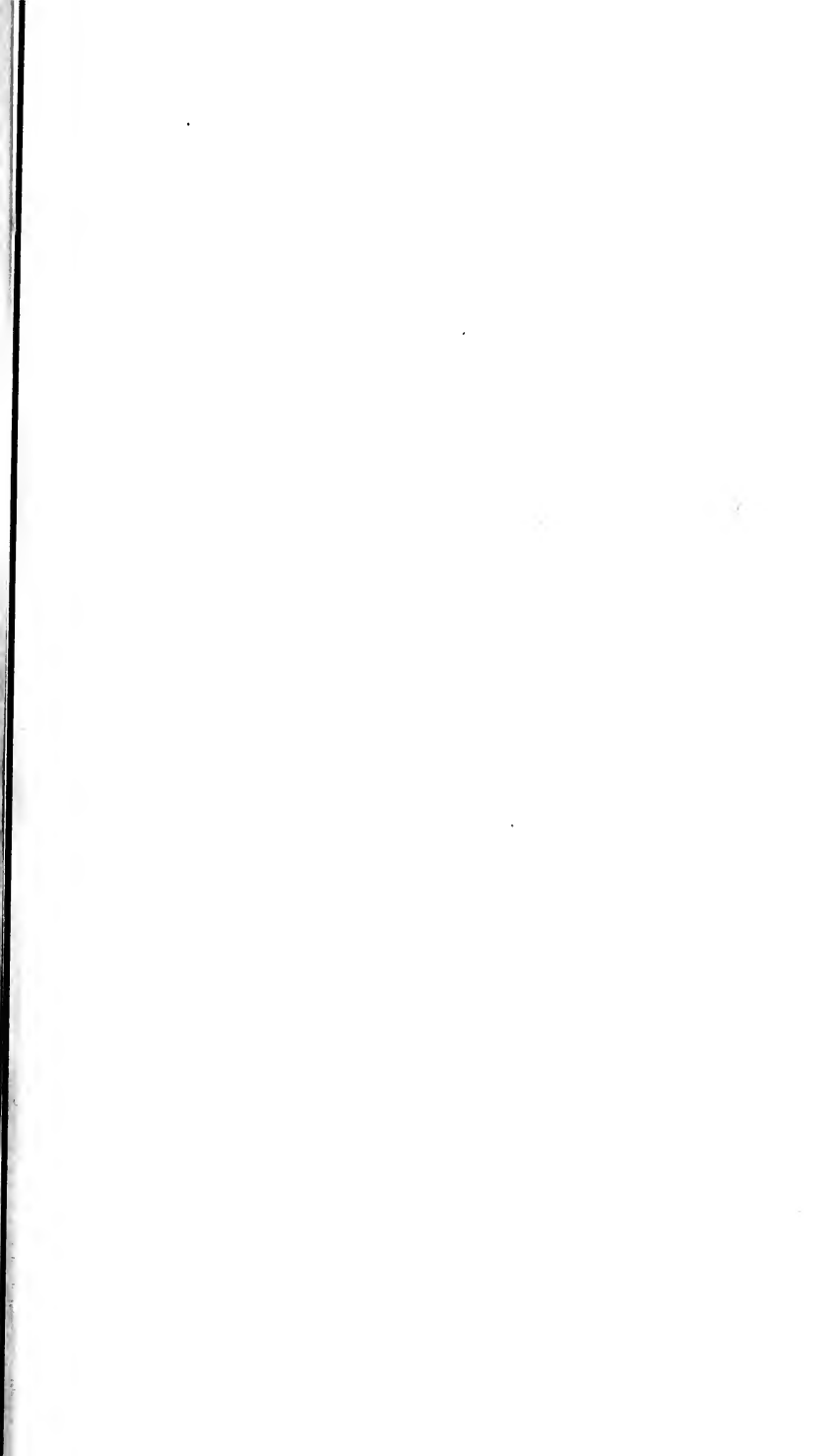
From Protestantism we may descend logically downward through Unitarianism, Rationalism, and Theism, to Speculative Pantheism; and, on the other side, we may descend downward through Romanism and Paganism to Material Pantheism. On the one hand, we arrive at the conclusion that thought is *the all* (our own thoughts); on the other, that matter is the all—that matter makes thought. Beyond this the plunge is into absolute scepticism,—that the All is Nothing, and that Nothing is the All,—that,

Naught is every thing,  
And every thing is Naught.



THE END.









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